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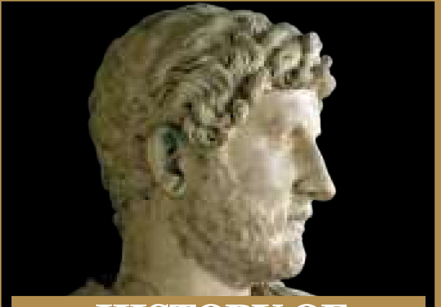
ROYALS AT WAR

IN THE SHADOW OF WAR, THE WORLD'S MONARCHIES HAD TO ADAPT OR CRUMBLE

EVOLVING WARRIORS
Uncover the frontline heroes of the 21st century



HISTORY OF WARLORDS

FIGHT AGAINST FASCISM

CHURCHILL WARNS INVASION IS NEAR

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The Sun

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FRENCH REPORT HITLER HAS TRIED INVASION ALREADY

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ROYALS AT WAR

The World Wars changed the face of Europe forever. Once-stable monarchies collapsed in revolutions, while others fought for their survival. Over the following pages, uncover the stories of the royals who resisted Nazi rule and inspired resistance, meet a king who fought in the trenches with his troops, follow the princesses who found themselves locked away in horrific concentration camps, and find out what happened to those who sided with Hitler.

FUTURE

ROYALS AT WAR

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WARRIORS TO MONARCHS

The evolution of the kings of Europe from war chiefs to heads of state

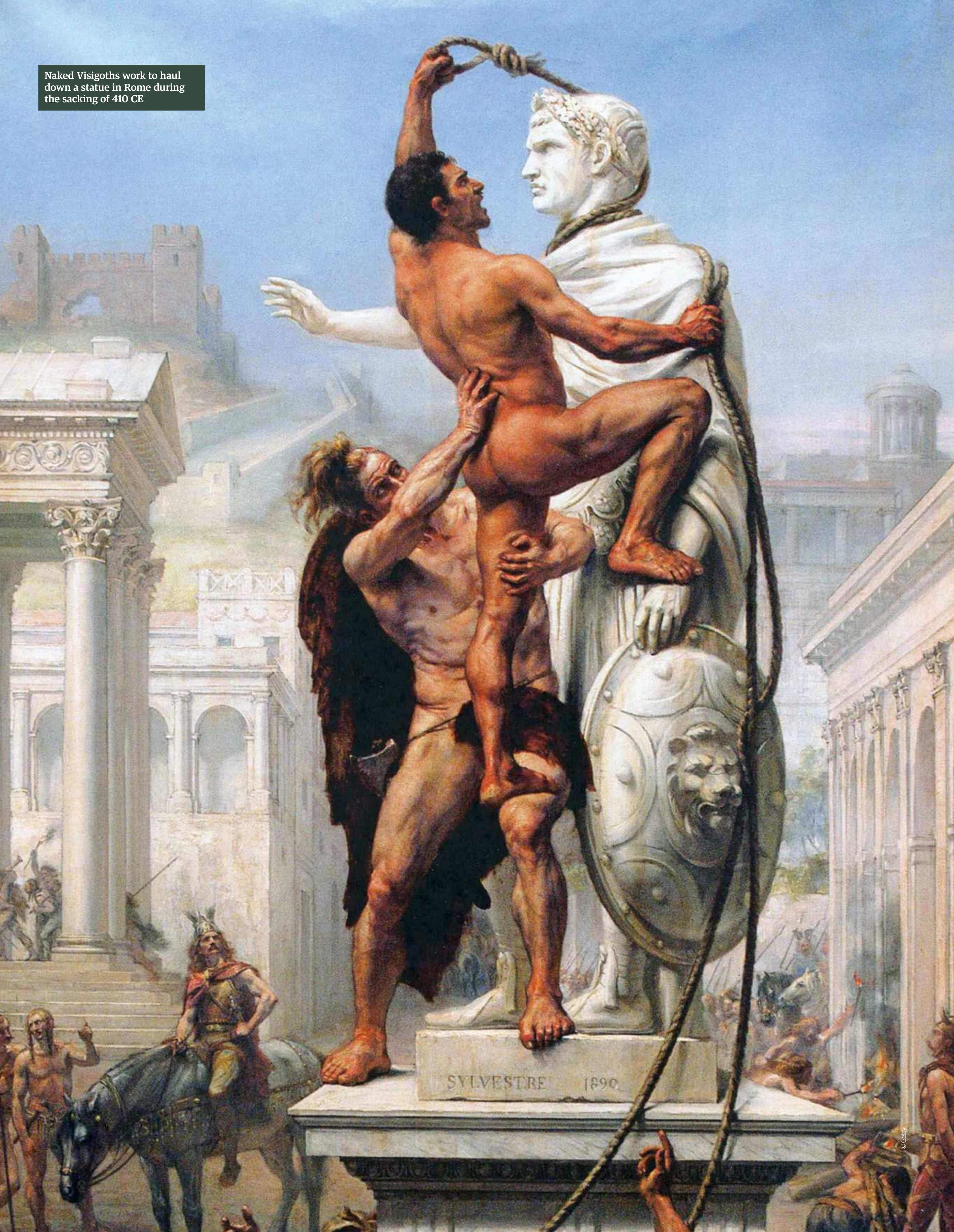
WRITTEN BY EDOARDO ALBERT

Standing at the centre of their battle lines, the kings stared at each other. Between them the grass was still green and verdant: within the hour it would be splattered with blood and gore. By the end of the day, one of them would likely be gasping his last breath, staring up at the sky through glazing eyes.

The kings, with their generals beside them, pored over the maps as the armies at their command moved like chess pieces in the great game of power. Defeat would mean the loss of territory, possibly even exile, but being far away from the battlefield there was no chance of their actually dying in the struggle about to commence.

There, in these two vignettes, is the single greatest transformation in the role of kings in European history over the last two millennia: from warlords leading their men into battle to sovereigns who issued orders from a distance that would send men into battle. The final step of the evolution was when kings became symbols of national unity with little political power. To understand how this happened we need to look at the world in which these kings first took power.

Everything was falling apart. The centre - the old Roman Imperial authority - could not hold any longer. But power cannot tolerate a vacuum: if the old power has fallen into decrepitude then a new power will take its place. That is precisely what happened in Europe in the 5th century. The Roman Empire had been living on borrowed time since the 2nd century; having been, in its days as a Republic, based on an economy of peasant farmers, the change to an imperial power made of Rome a slave-based society that depended on further conquest to replenish both its treasury and its pool of slave labour; it had become a 'Raubwirtschaft': an economy based on plunder. When Hadrian defined the limits of empire in the 2nd century he effectively condemned it, although the dying took centuries. As the empire staggered through political and economic crises, the barbarian tribes on its borders, sensing weakness, decided to cross the borders and take their share of the spoil. For while the economy was collapsing - as shown most graphically in the devaluation of Roman coinage - yet from the outside the empire, resting on the accumulated capital of centuries, still appeared wealthy. But these barbarian tribes were led by warlords who imported their own


SYLVESTRE 1890

Naked Visigoths work to haul down a statue in Rome during the sacking of 410 CE

© Getty

ideas of kingship. It was the interplay of the Roman and barbarian ideas of rule that would form the framework upon which later European ideas of the role of kings would be erected.

Perhaps the best place to see how this played out is Britain. In 410 CE, the civil authorities wrote to Emperor Honorius asking for his help in fighting the Saxon warbands that were plaguing the southern and eastern coasts. Honorius wrote back to tell them that they were on their own: at the time Honorius was hiding behind the marshes surrounding Ravenna while the Visigoths were sacking Rome. Imperial authority was collapsing in upon itself.

What happened next in Britain is not clear, since, for the 5th and 6th centuries, history effectively ends: the number of contemporary historical documents can be counted on the fingers of one hand, and while archaeology is beginning to fill in some of the gaps in terms of populations and their movements, it can tell us little about the political arrangements of the time. However, as Britain started to emerge from this mythic interregnum, the kingdoms that begin to come to light tell us a great deal about how rulership had changed.

Where before under the Romans administration had been relatively centralised, now the country was split into many small kingdoms, some barely larger than a couple of valleys and a few fields. Power had devolved downwards to a very local level, and there it subsisted with kings who were little more than gang leaders. The world had changed a lot since the days of Julius Caesar and Mark Antony, when Roman generals commanded armies tens of thousands strong. By Late Antiquity, even Roman forces had shrunk to much smaller detachments, numbering in the hundreds. In Britain, after the Romans left, it might take fewer than 50 men to conquer a kingdom. In the first surviving law code promulgated by an Anglo-Saxon king, the code of Ine, King of Wessex, written in 694, an army ('here' in Old English) is a group of more than 35 men. The war bands that conquered Britain for its new Anglo-Saxon overlords were tiny – usually less than 100 strong. With such small forces, the role of the leader of the warband was crucial: he led the army, he anchored it from the centre of its shield wall, and he charged into battle with his picked companions around him. As such, the king was both the rallying point for his own men and the target for the enemy: kill the king and the battle was won.

Naturally, this made for short and violent reigns. The regnal lists for the kings of Bernicia, an Anglian kingdom based at Bamburgh in Northumberland that was founded by Ida around 547, testify to the dangers faced by these early monarchs: its first ten kings all died in battle. While excavations of the burial ground at Bamburgh have shown that the high-status individuals buried there had life-long access to good food – the peasantry were liable to periods of famine when crops failed – it also showed the catastrophic injuries suffered by the warrior elite: one skeleton had been cut diagonally in half,

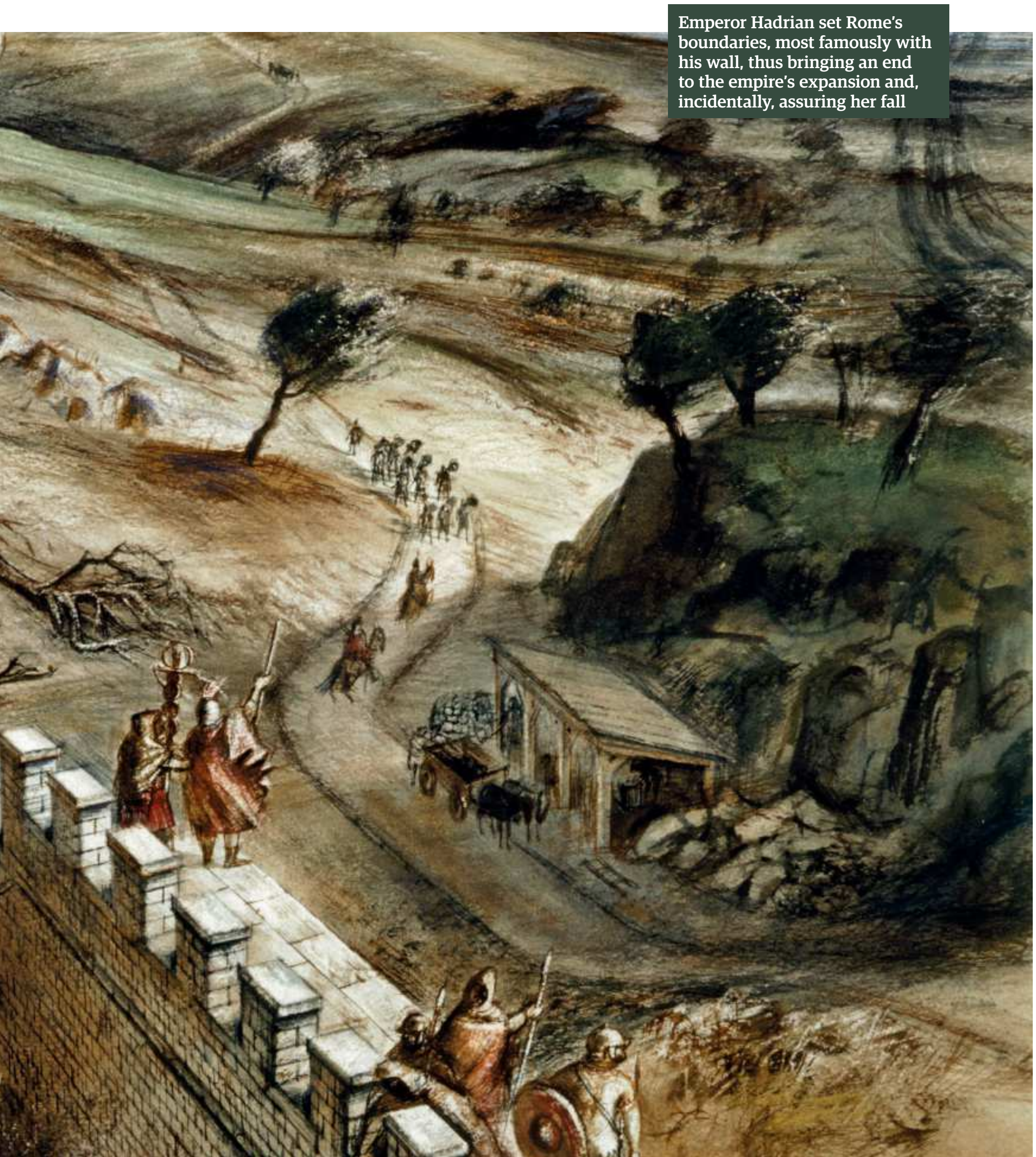
Augustus, the first emperor of Rome, against whose reign later European monarchs would always measure themselves

from the shoulder to the opposite hip, the sword strike cutting through clavicle, ribs and spine.

However, for those who managed to navigate this volatile environment of endless conflict and survive, the rewards could be spectacular. When leading such small armies, individual warriors could change the course of a battle and find themselves, at the end of it, king of a kingdom. For another aspect of these small warbands was that there were no defined rules of succession. The key part of being accepted as king was to have the support of the warband: the king was essentially the man with the largest and most dangerous gang behind him. To cement the loyalty of his men, the king had to be prodigal, giving to his followers the treasures accrued through battle and the spoils from a system of taxation that was not dissimilar to an extortion racket: give us ten per cent of your produce and we'll protect you from others like us.

These first Anglo-Saxon kings were all thorough-going pagans. But with the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity, new notions of kingship joined the mix, most notably the idea of a king as lawgiver. The Anglo-Saxons had a body of customary, or common, law (a term we still use today) that governed everyday relationships and disputes. The kings supported and enforced these laws so far as they were able. But with the conversion, two new legal sources came into play. The first of these was Biblical: the law of the Church, taken from the elements of Judaic law that were adopted into Christianity. In Europe, the most fundamental and transformative result of this was the abolition of slavery.

Slavery had been the economic bedrock of the Roman Empire, but since the Church ruled that it was wrong to take a fellow human being as a slave, the practice fell into abeyance in Europe, leading to a sustained surge in economic productivity as other solutions to the problems of production were sought and found, such as the heavy plough and water-powered mills. As a result, the general population in Europe


Emperor Hadrian set Rome's boundaries, most famously with his wall, thus bringing an end to the empire's expansion and, incidentally, assuring her fall

THE RETURN OF THE KING

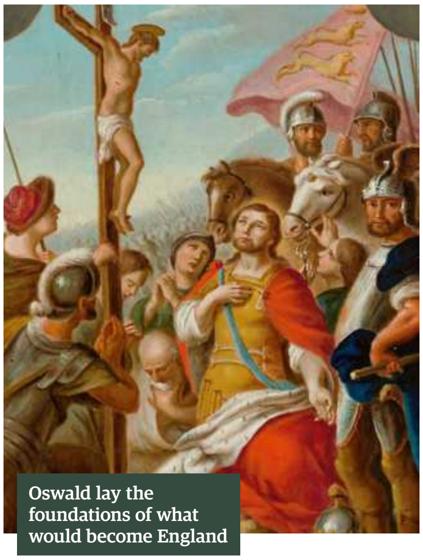
KING OSWALD'S REIGN WAS ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT IN BRITISH HISTORY

Oswald, son of Æthelfrith, King of Northumbria, was 12 when, with his mother, sister and younger brother, he fled into exile. His uncle had just killed his father, and his mother wasn't going to stick around to see if Edwin would exercise mercy on his nephews.

Oswald journeyed to Dál Riata, the sea-spanning kingdom from Ulster to Argyll, where he embraced the vibrant Christianity of the monks of Iona. When news arrived in 633 of Edwin's death in battle at the hands of his old enemy Cadwallon, King of Gwynedd, Oswald was presented with an opportunity.

With Cadwallon intent on razing Northumbria, Oswald returned with a small war band and surprised Cadwallon near Hadrian's Wall. The battle of Heavenfield in 634, fought between armies probably consisting of no more than 100 on each side, proved among the most consequential in English history.

Oswald emerged triumphant, and, in gratitude to the God who had given him victory, brought monks from Iona to convert his pagan people. The monks quickly set about founding a civilisation. By the time of Oswald's death in 644 he had succeeded in laying the foundations for what would become England.


Oswald lay the foundations of what would become England

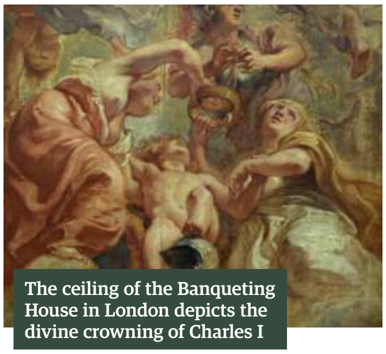
THE SUN KINGS

THE ABSOLUTE MONARCHS WHO PROVOKED A REVOLUTION

Through the most turbulent half century in England's history, the country went from monarchy through civil war to Commonwealth before returning to a restored monarchy. While the Tudors get all the attention in history classes, TV programmes and award-winning historical fiction, it was the reign of the Stuarts that transformed the constitutional settlement of Britain into its modern form.

King Charles I embraced the concept of a king being consecrated by God, meaning that a monarch's rule was divinely sanctioned. The art he commissioned to glorify his reign, particularly the paintings by Rubens in Banqueting House, illustrate this exalted idea. But against this stood the Puritan idea of all men standing as equals before God, an essentially egalitarian view that clashed violently with the hierarchical view of the Stuarts and the Anglican Church during the English Civil Wars. The result was regicide and the installation of a Commonwealth under the rule of the Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell. Yet this did not prove to be the death of monarchial rule in Britain.

In 1660, with nine years of enforced puritanism having proved too much for all but the most fervent of Puritans and Cromwell dead, the country collectively decided on the return of the king, Charles II, but a king diminished and constrained by a Parliament that had become the locus of power. It was a peculiarly English settlement to the political quandaries that bedevilled Europe during the early modern era but one that proved so durable that it weathered two world wars.



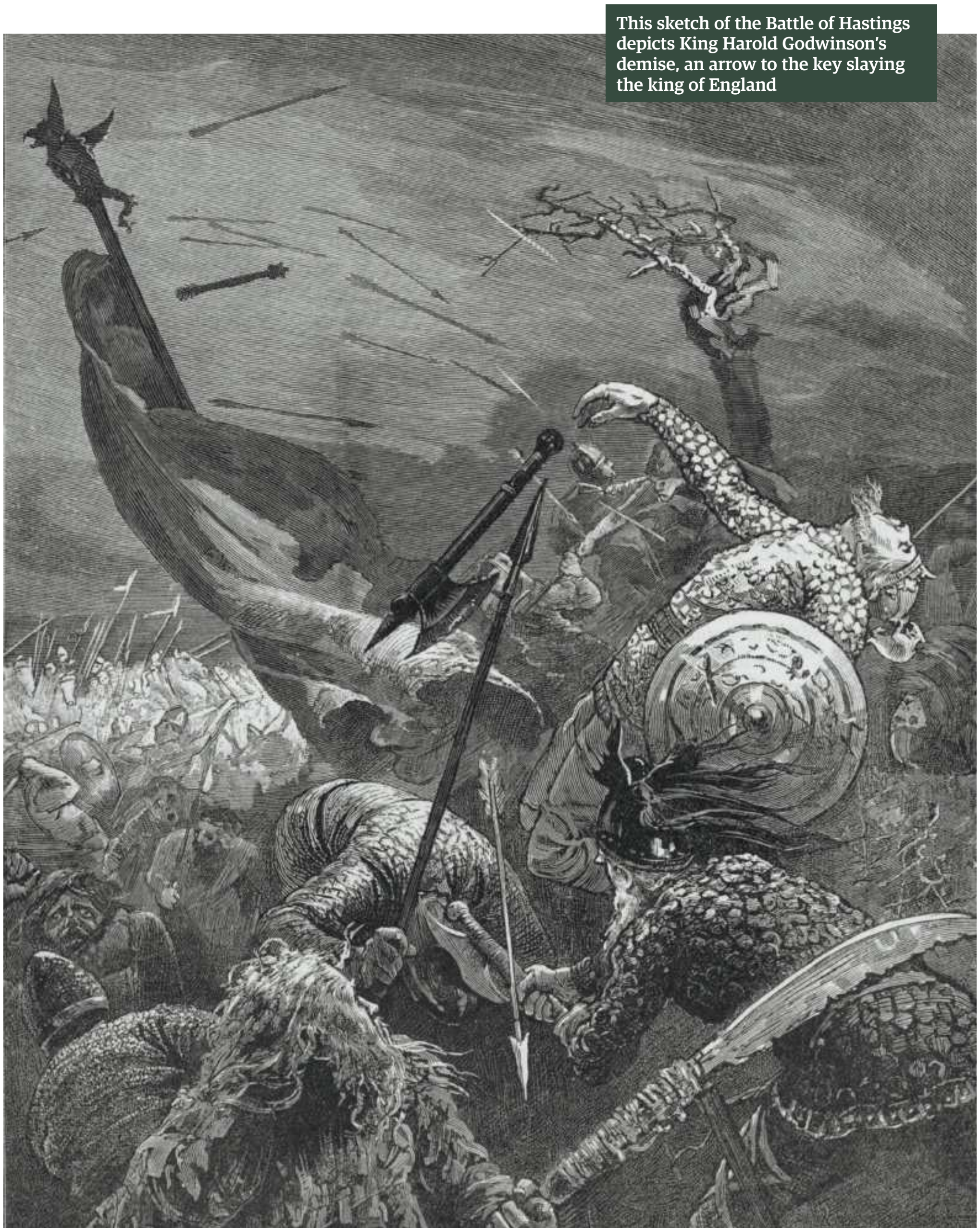
The ceiling of the Banqueting House in London depicts the divine crowning of Charles I

became significantly better nourished than the proletarian underclass of the Roman Empire, as well as significantly freer.

The other source of new legal ideas was Rome itself: through the Church, Roman ideas of jurisprudence were introduced into the ideals of European kingship. Thus the later law code promulgated by King Alfred the Great begins by stating the background to the new laws he was proposing in the triple inheritance of Jewish, Church and common law. All of these combined became the basis of English law as the small kingdoms of the 5th and 6th centuries slowly amalgamated into the larger kingdoms of the 7th, 8th and 9th centuries.

However, when the sword hit the shield, the king's job was still to lead his army from the front. Alfred did that himself during his long struggle against the Viking Great Heathen Army, personally leading the charge at the Battle of Ashdown in 871. However, by this time the size of armies had grown considerably: at the crucial Battle of Edington in 878, Alfred's forces probably numbered in the low thousands. But the king was still expected to take his place among them, although the greater size of the forces and the presence of the king's own personal bodyguard made it somewhat less likely that a monarch would die in the skirmishes that were the standard field battle of the Medieval era.

It was when kingdoms were at stake that kings might still fall, as illustrated in the events of the most famous year in English history, 1066. During this tumultuous year, three claimants to the English throne stepped forwards: Harald Hardrada, King of Norway; Duke William of Normandy; and Harold Godwinson, Earl of Wessex and, by acclamation of the witan, the assembly of the magnates of Anglo-Saxon England, the crowned king of England following the death of King Edward. However, by the time the storms of battle had passed, Harald Hardrada and Harold Godwinson both lay dead, cut down in battle, and William had become, by right of conquest, the king of England.



This sketch of the Battle of Hastings depicts King Harold Godwinson's demise, an arrow to the key slaying the king of England

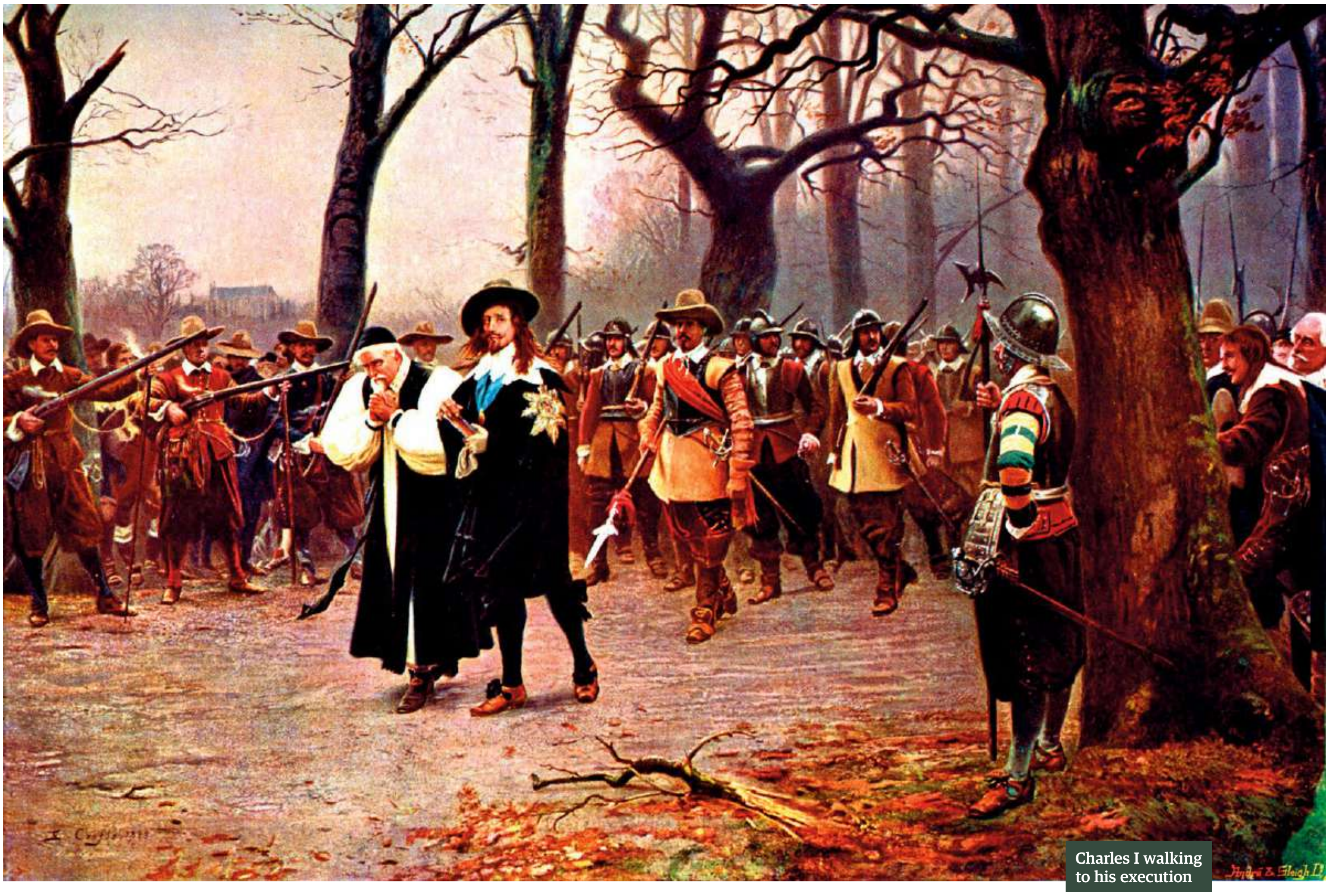
With the Normans in charge, the rules of succession to the throne of England became codified. In the Anglo-Saxon era, who became king was a trade-off between the rights of inheritance of the royal issue and the acceptance of the claimant by the assembled magnates of the land. Under the Normans, and afterwards, the rules of succession were reduced to the closeness of descent, with the rightful king being the eldest and closest male relative to the deceased monarch. This approach was fine if a king had sons that survived, but things became more complicated if he did not. Furthermore, the Norman and Plantagenet kings were forced to tread carefully where their powerful barons were concerned; it was King John's outraging of what the barons saw as their rights that led to him being forced into signing the Magna Carta in 1215, the charter that guaranteed the king be bound by the laws he promulgated as well as his subjects.

Throughout the High Medieval Period there were power struggles concerning the concentration of power, with kings facing off against nobility and the Church. But with the increasing wealth and greater political stability of the era, the kings of Europe began to accrue more power, while their courts became the nuclei of national administrations. This tendency reached its climax during the reign of Louis XIV of France, who abrogated all power to himself with the famous – although apocryphal – statement, "L'état c'est moi," ("I am the state"). In Britain, King Charles I shared the same exalted view of the duties and claims of kingship. But such an absolute claim to power, even when backed up by a view of the king as divinely appointed by God to rule, inevitably drew a political reaction, one that ultimately proved fatal to the political ambitions of Europe's monarchs. The most significant of these revolutions was the French Revolution, which saw King Louis XVI guillotined in 1793.

While the ensuing French Republic did not last, and the 19th century saw a retrenchment among European royal families, the cataclysm of World War I brought an end to many of the surviving monarchies. Germany, Russia, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Albania and Montenegro all lost their sovereigns, and many of the monarchies that clung on were gone by the end of World War II.

Even so, the distance Europe's monarchies had come was highlighted by the fact that none of these kings died while battling for their kingdoms. War had extended far beyond its generals and leaders, and a king was too important to risk in battle. In 1485, Richard III was the last king of England to die in battle; James IV of Scotland was the last British monarch to die in battle on Flodden Field in 1488; and the last European king to die in battle was Charles XII of Sweden in 1718.

The whiskered grandchildren of Queen Victoria who lost their thrones after World War I were among the last iterations of an idea that had exerted a great and terrible control on the human imagination for millennia: king, tyrant, emperor.



Charles I walking to his execution

WORLD WAR I

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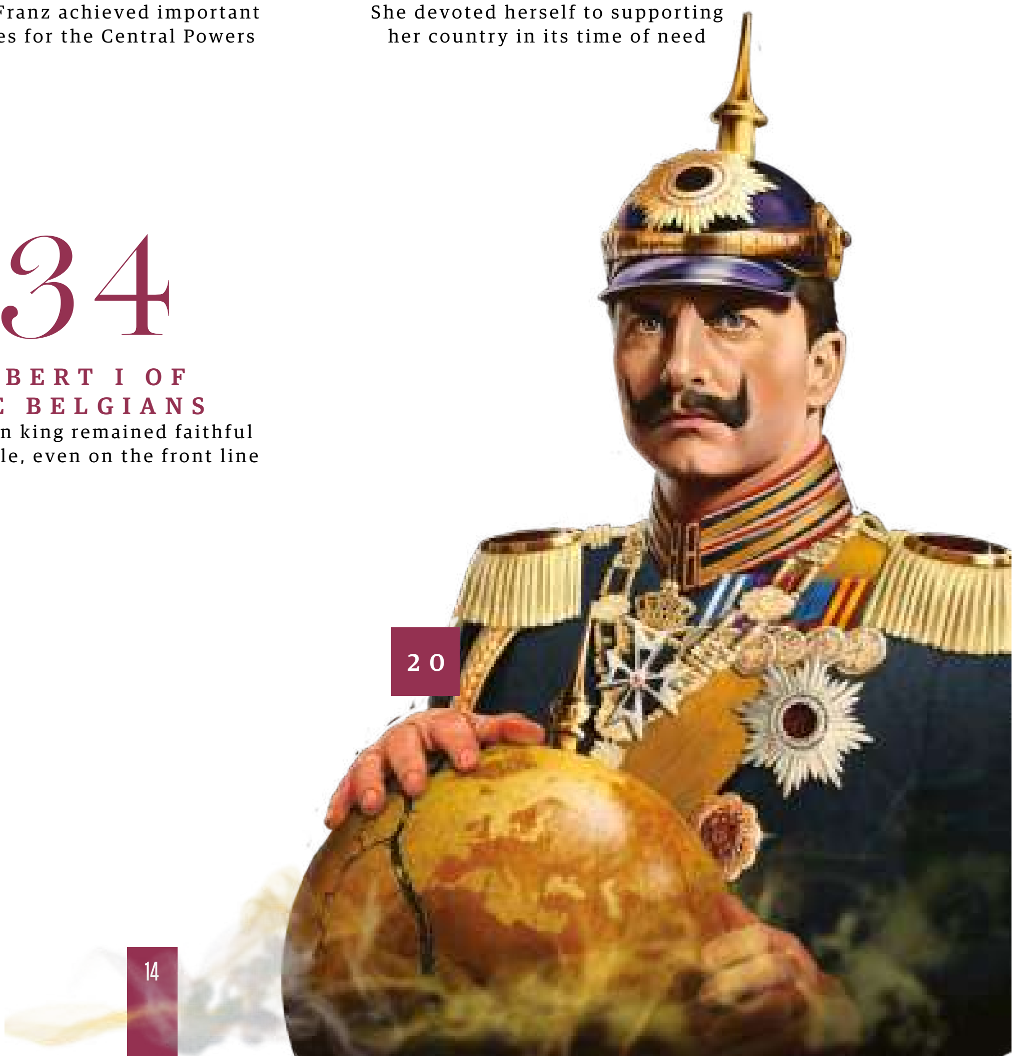
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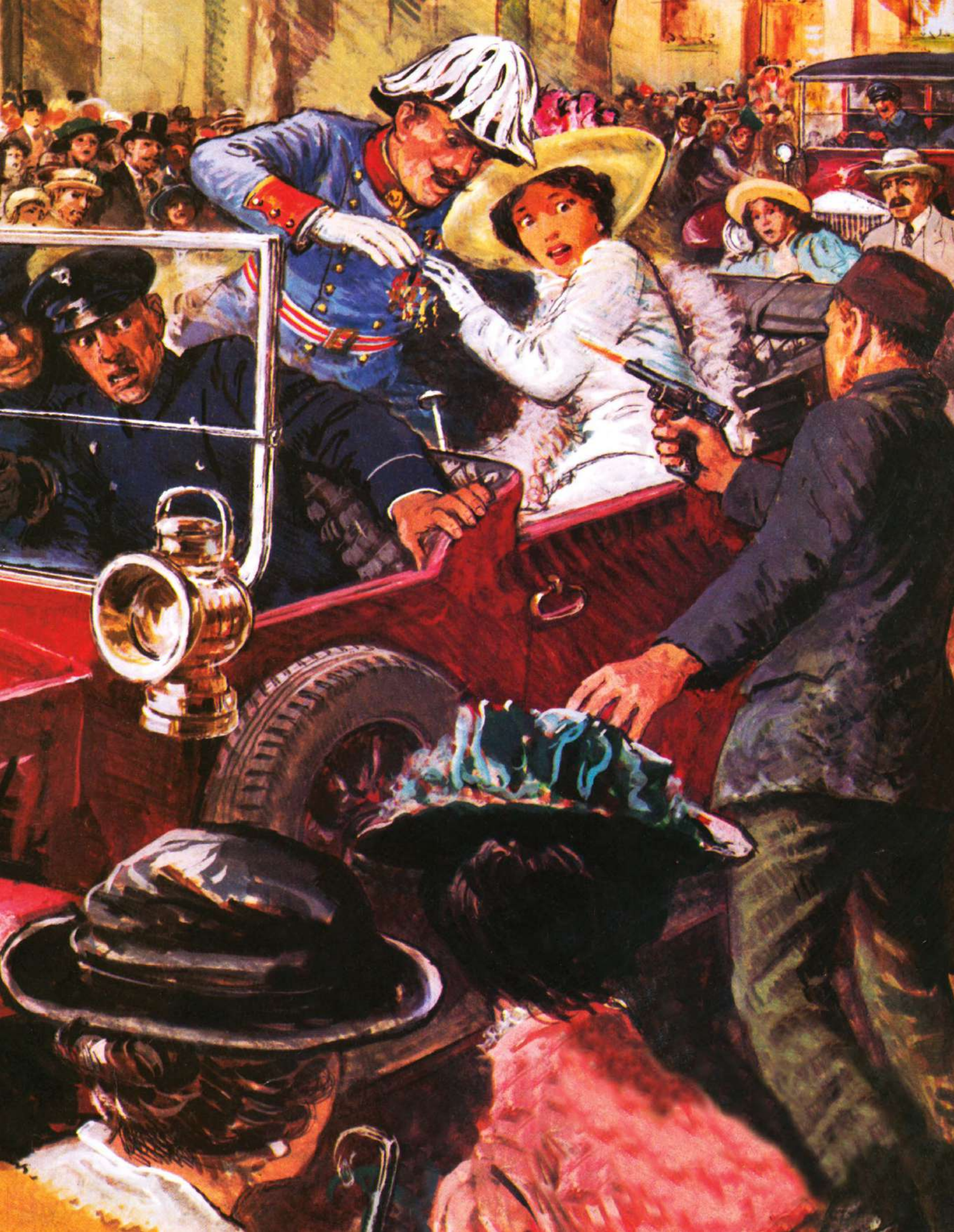


ASSASSINATION OF ARCHDUKE FRANZ FERDINAND

The butal slaying of a future monarch that threw Europe into the abyss of war

WRITTEN BY JACK GRIFFITHS

Of all the assassinations throughout history, that of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, was both one of the most climactic and far-reaching in terms of consequences. The shooting of Ferdinand on 28 June 1914 in Sarajevo, the modern-day capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina, shook the entire world and was a major step towards the outbreak of the First World War. Many historians argue that his shooting led to the deaths of almost 10 million soldiers and countless other civilians.

The assassination was born out of a desire for Austria-Hungary's South-Slav provinces to be split from their vast empire and incorporated into Greater Serbia; a desire which had led to heightened disputes between Serbia and its neighbouring countries. This came to a head in 1913 when Bosnian Orthodox Serb Danilo Ilić, the leader of a Serbian Black Hand terrorist cell in Sarajevo, decided to go and speak to one of the organisation's founders, Serbian Colonel C. A. Popovic. The Black Hand was a secret military society tasked with reclaiming the historical Serbian territories controlled by Austria-Hungary or other powers. Its motto was 'Unification or Death' and it specialised in covert operations designed to further Serbia's cause. However, Ilić no longer believed engagement in such a manner would lead to success, making a case to Popovic that direct action should be taken instead. After temporarily considering the Governor of Bosnia as an assassination target, it was eventually agreed that Archduke Ferdinand would be their victim.

The plan was to strike during the Archduke's visit to the city in June. The weaponry for the assassination arrived with a team of young Serbian and Bosnian Serb assassins that Ilić had recruited on 26 May, and by 4 June the six assassins were all in Sarajevo and ready to act. Along with a selection of hand guns, bombs and knives, Ilić also distributed suicide pills to the assassins - truly 'unification or death'. On the following day, Archduke Ferdinand was assassinated, along with his wife Duchess Sophie.

Despite the plans, the assassins and their masters in the Black Hand were caught, imprisoned or executed. The death of one man set in train a series of events that led to the Empire of Austria-Hungary issuing an ultimatum in July of that year. This included a list of demands that Serbia was to accept within 48 hours or face having Austria-Hungary's ambassador removed from the country. Serbia did not accept, and on 28 July both sides mobilised their armies. Due to a series of alliances struck between the Great Powers of Europe, this forced Russia, France, Britain and Germany, among others, to take sides and begin the most brutal, bloody and costly war that the world had ever seen.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY

FRANZ FERDINAND

FOR HIS KINGDOM

Archduke of Austria, Royal Prince of Hungary and Bohemia Franz Ferdinand was unpopular among Serbs, who wanted to reclaim land.
Strengths A leader of great energy and physical prowess.
Weakness Distant and prone to bouts of hysteria.

1911 DOUBLE PHAETON

AN EXPENSIVE LUXURY

Offering good speed and excellent all-round visibility, the 1911 Double Phaeton was considered a luxury item for the time.
Strengths Much more mobile than foot or horse-mounted units.
Weakness Poorly armoured and cumbersome in tight spaces.

STEYR M1912 PISTOL

DURABLE AND POPULAR

The Austrian-made semi-automatic pistol offered impressive stopping power at short range and was small enough to be easily concealed.
Strengths A reliable pistol carried by Austria-Hungary police and army.
Weakness Poor shooting accuracy over long distances.

01 Motorcade forms

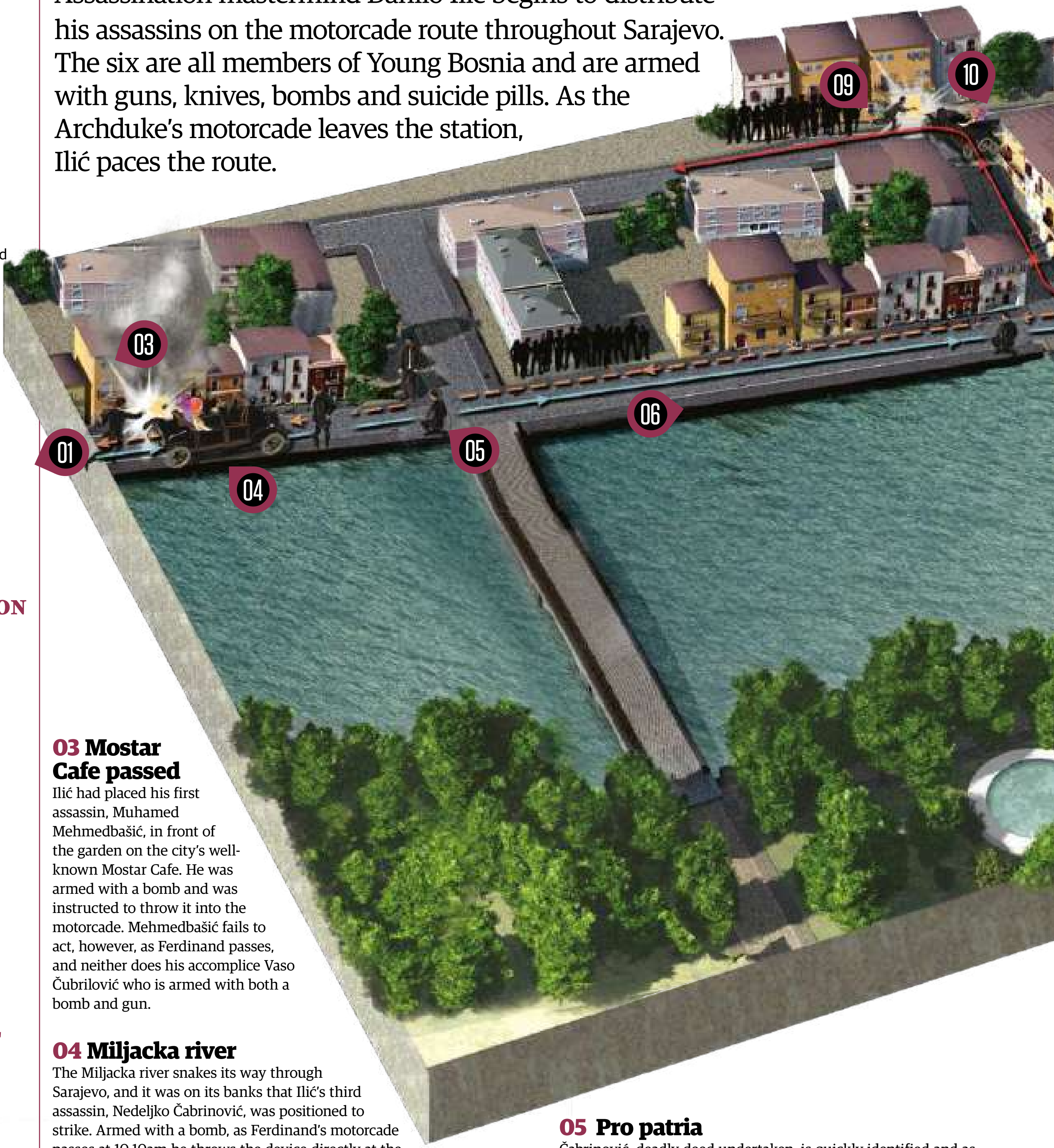
On the morning of the 28th Archduke Franz Ferdinand arrives by train in Sarajevo. Ferdinand is met by Governor Oskar Potiorek and they are led to a waiting motorcade. They step into the third car of six, a Gräf & Stift 1911 Double Phaeton, an open-topped sports car.

10 United in death

When he thought all had been lost, that he had failed his and Ilić's cause, Princip saw a second chance. Like a flash Princip bolted towards the car and drawing his semi-automatic pistol fired twice from a distance of approximately 1.5 metres. The first shot hit the Archduke in his jugular vein, the second hit his wife in the abdomen. Both were killing shots and Sophie died almost immediately, with the Archduke following minutes later.

02 The trap is set

Assassination mastermind Danilo Ilić begins to distribute his assassins on the motorcade route throughout Sarajevo. The six are all members of Young Bosnia and are armed with guns, knives, bombs and suicide pills. As the Archduke's motorcade leaves the station, Ilić paces the route.



03 Mostar Cafe passed

Ilić had placed his first assassin, Muhamed Mehmedbašić, in front of the garden on the city's well-known Mostar Cafe. He was armed with a bomb and was instructed to throw it into the motorcade. Mehmedbašić fails to act, however, as Ferdinand passes, and neither does his accomplice Vaso Čubrilović who is armed with both a bomb and gun.

04 Miljacka river

The Miljacka river snakes its way through Sarajevo, and it was on its banks that Ilić's third assassin, Nedeljko Čabrinović, was positioned to strike. Armed with a bomb, as Ferdinand's motorcade passes at 10:10am he throws the device directly at the Double Phaeton. It rebounds off the convertible's folded roof and bounces under the car following Ferdinand's. The bomb explodes, totalling the car and leaving a crater in the road. 20 passers by are hit by debris and wounded.

05 Pro patria

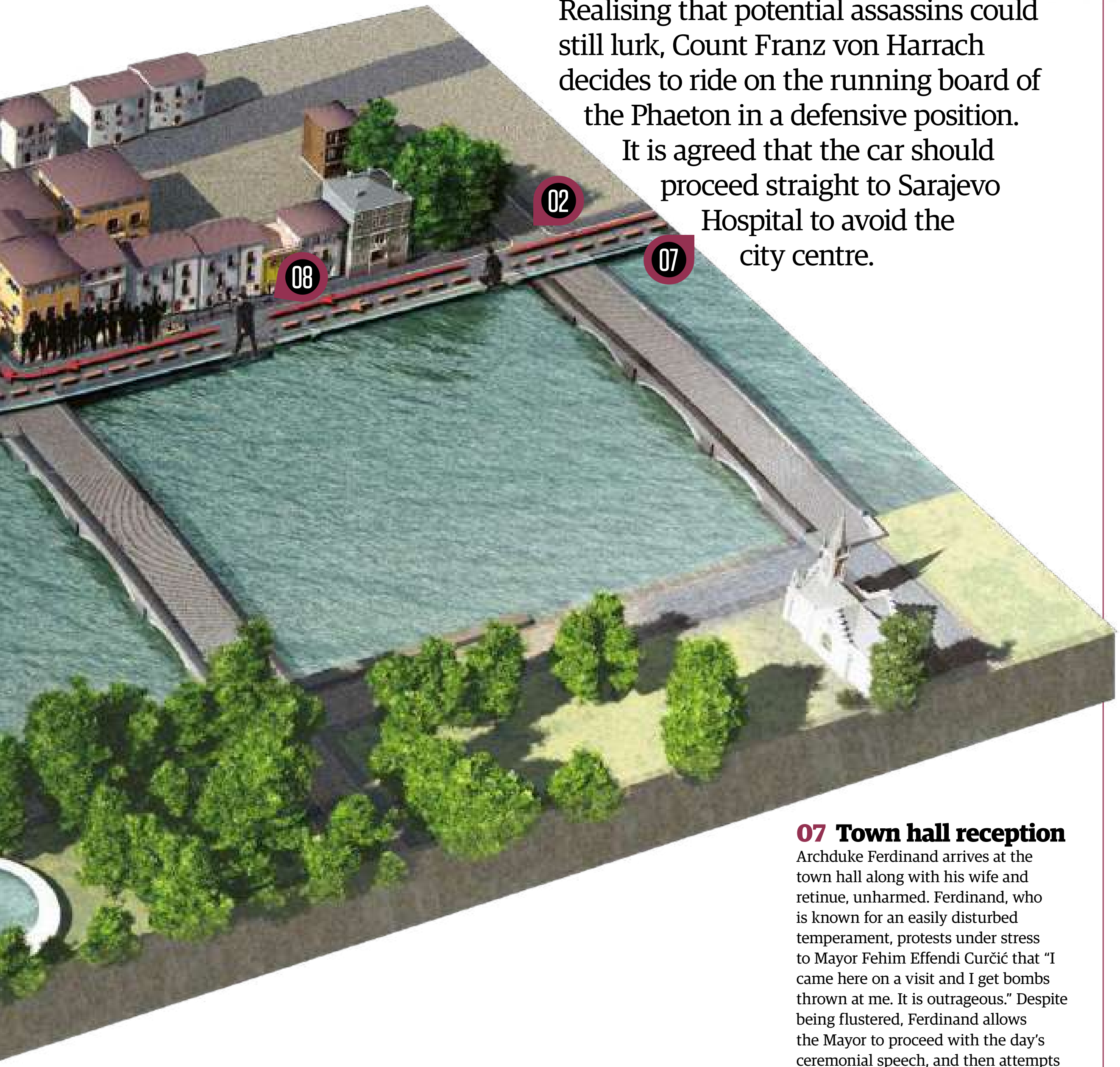
Čabrinović, deadly deed undertaken, is quickly identified and as he is closed in on, quickly swallows his cyanide pill and jumps from the banks into the Miljacka. The pill does not have the desired effect and after vomiting severely, he lives. He is dragged from the river by police and set upon by survivors of the blast.

09 Princip's second chance

Having failed to attack Ferdinand, Gavrilo Princip proceeds to a nearby food shop, Schiller's delicatessen. Upon leaving the eatery, he realises that he is staring at the royal car. The car's driver had taken a wrong turning on its way to the hospital and was now reversing with the Archduke, his wife and retinue still inside in the open-topped vehicle.

08 Added protection

By 10:45am, the reception for the Archduke is completed and he and his retinue leave the city's hall once more. Realising that potential assassins could still lurk, Count Franz von Harrach decides to ride on the running board of the Phaeton in a defensive position. It is agreed that the car should proceed straight to Sarajevo Hospital to avoid the city centre.



07 Town hall reception

Archduke Ferdinand arrives at the town hall along with his wife and retinue, unharmed. Ferdinand, who is known for an easily disturbed temperament, protests under stress to Mayor Fehim Effendi Curčić that "I came here on a visit and I get bombs thrown at me. It is outrageous." Despite being flustered, Ferdinand allows the Mayor to proceed with the day's ceremonial speech, and then attempts to brush aside the attack by thanking the people of the city for their ovations.

06 High-speed getaway

The remaining motorcade, having realised they were under attack, sped away from the blast site towards Sarajevo town hall, leaving the disabled car behind. Now travelling at high speed, the motorcade screams by Ilić's remaining three assassins – Cvjetko Popović, Gavrilo Princip and Trifun Grabež. They are unable to make their moves.

THE BLACK HAND

DANILO ILIĆ

TEACHER TURNED KILLER

The teacher turned assassin Danilo Ilić became radicalised in the early 1900s. On his capture, he admitted everything to try to avoid death.

Strengths Well trained in planning covert operations.

Weakness No real military experience and tactical flexibility.

ASSASSINS

LURKING IN THE SHADOWS

Some were well-trained by the militaries loyal to the ruler they were trying to kill, others were mere amateurs with personal grudges.

Strengths Covert units that easily blend into crowds.

Weakness Not heavily armed and rely on shock tactics to be effective.

FN 1910 PISTOL

ENDURING WEAPON

Remaining in production until 1983, the simple design and compact reliability of the FN 1910 made it an enduring firearm.

Strengths Compact and can be fired in six-round bursts.

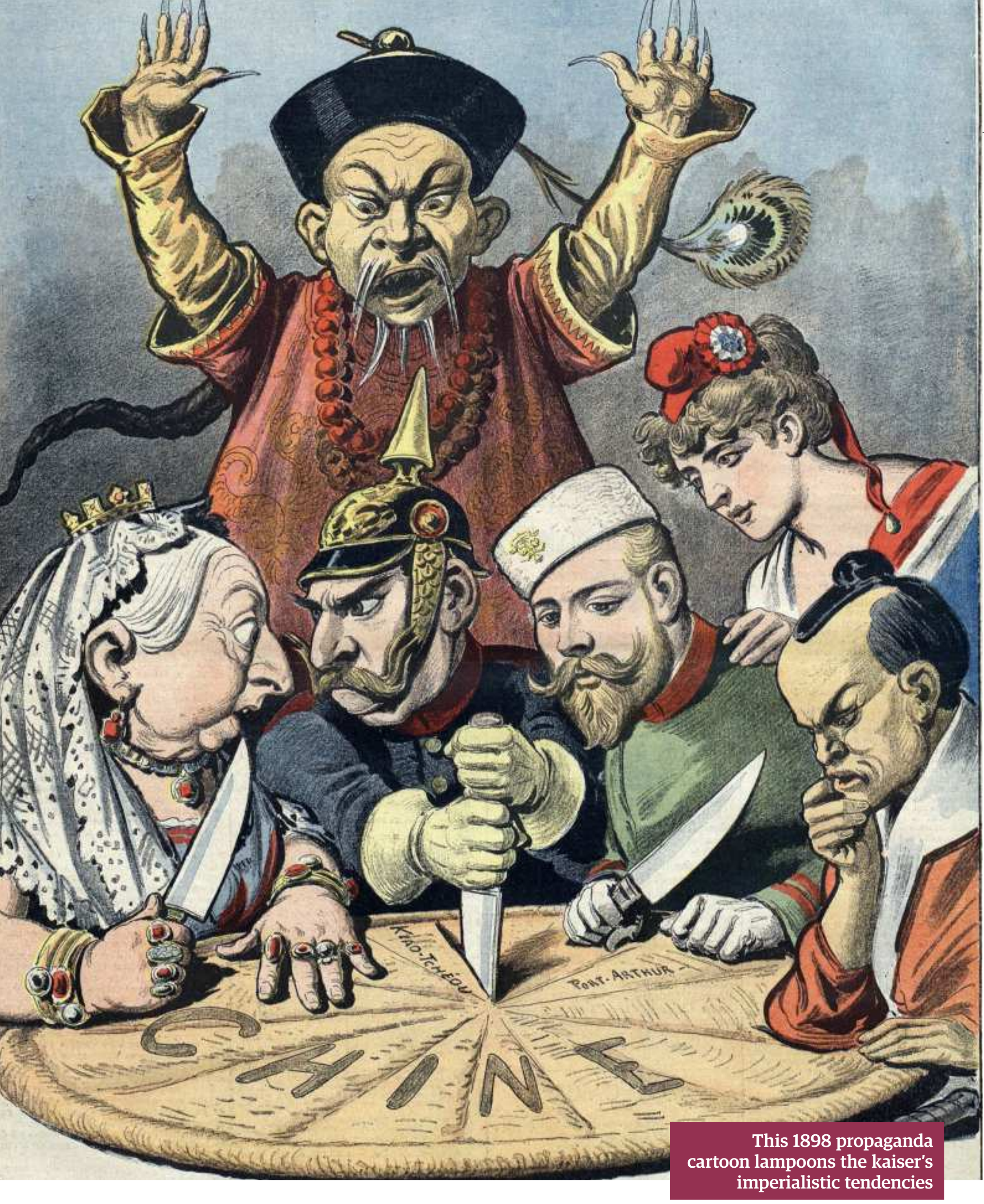
Weakness Poor shooting accuracy over long distances.

WHY BLAME THE KAISER?

How Wilhelm II's imperial ambitions and personal anxieties led the world to war in 1914

WRITTEN BY HARRY CUNNINGHAM

World War I was one of the most devastating conflicts in human history. It is estimated that over 10 million soldiers were killed, wounded or went missing. On a single day in 1916, as the Battle of the Somme began in earnest, the British Army suffered 54,470 casualties. This truly was a world war, with the conflict spilling out from Europe into Asia and Africa. From the might of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which now stretched all the way from the Adriatic to the sweeping and unwieldy Russian expanse, to Britain, the undisputed queen of the seas, and finally to Germany, the newest empire on the block, keen to flex its muscles and prove to the world that it was a force to be reckoned with. But who was responsible for this tragedy of epic proportions? Many blame the entire imperial system itself, a regime that allowed a select band of elites to govern in their own self-interest with little regard for ordinary people. But in recent years this theory has been re-evaluated so the finger could point to Kaiser Wilhelm II - the paranoid, arrogant and self-aggrandising emperor of Germany - as the man who bears overall responsibility for the start of this conflict in the summer of 1914. Is this an overly simplistic view, placing too much importance on the actions of the individual? And if we can conclude that Germany was the main aggressor, was it the kaiser alone with all of his insecurities who bears the brunt of the blame, or is it the many generals that he was surrounded by?



This 1898 propaganda cartoon lampoons the kaiser's imperialistic tendencies

A photograph of Kaiser Wilhelm with his General Staff, taken in c.1915

Wilhelm rides through Berlin in August 1914 to say farewell to German expeditionary forces

ACCUSATION 1:
HE GOADED BRITAIN

Wilhelm II loathed and was obsessed with Britain in equal measure. As Queen Victoria's eldest grandson, he was a frequent visitor to Osborne House on the Isle of Wight and enjoyed sailing at Cowes as a young man. From there it was only a short trip to Portsmouth where the Royal Navy had its headquarters and the young kaiser would become infatuated with British warships. When he was made a British admiral in 1889, he said, "Fancy wearing the same uniform as St Vincent and Nelson; it is enough to make one quite giddy."

Wilhelm took his duties as an admiral very seriously but failed to win the acceptance of the British upper class. When he turned up in full uniform, goose-stepping, his sword fully drawn as he inspected sailors for Queen Victoria, the generals muttered that it was an "unseemly comedy." The kaiser, a reactionist whose fragile pride had been wounded, abandoned fitting in with Britain. Instead he vowed to build his own nation that, in his mind, would imitate and outdo Britain in every capacity.

The most obvious way in which he achieved this was through the building of a navy that could outperform the British fleet. Influenced by the naval theorist Alfred Thayer Mahan, who argued a strong navy was instrumental to a strong state, Wilhelm got to work and Germany began building under naval chief Alfred von Tirpitz. The First Fleet Act of 1898 commissioned one flagship, 16 battleships, eight armoured costal ships, nine large cruisers and 26 small cruisers by 1904. In 1900, Tirpitz's Second Fleet Act more than doubled the navy again, with a target date of 1917. Further amendments came in 1906, 1908 and 1912.

But Britain was nervous about the prospect of Germany's expansion, fearing not only that Germany might attack but that they would also challenge their colonial dominance. Wilhelm dismissing his chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, who had been in power since the 1860s and considered foreign policy on a practical basis believing that a secure Europe was advantageous to Germany. Instead Wilhelm advocated an aggressive form of foreign policy know as 'Weltpoltik', or world politics. Through either diplomatic means or military might, Wilhelm dreamed of raising Germany level with the global empires of Britain and France to give the new nation its 'place in the sun,' as he put it. In response, Britain signed the Entente Cordiale with France in 1904, strengthened in 1907 when Russia joined.

Britain's suspicions that Germany would begin threatening its hegemony abroad were confirmed first by their capture and then lease of Kiaochow from the Chinese as a base from which to conduct commercial activity - a direct threat to Hong Kong, which Britain had also leased from the Chinese in a similar agreement. Germany also discreetly supplied the South African Boers with weapons to fight Britain during the Second Boer War. Wilhelm himself sent a telegram in which he openly congratulated the Boer President Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger on maintaining the independence of his kingdom. When this was leaked, it caused outrage across Britain and stirred anti-German feeling.

Relations with Britain were also strained by the death of Queen Victoria, who was Wilhelm's grandmother. Wilhelm had adored Victoria and she had been able to handle his fiery temperament, but her death brought his uncle, Edward VII, to the throne, who the kaiser loathed.

Wilhelm was gradually stripped of his decision-making powers during the war

Wilhelm also did Anglo-German relations no favours when he became embroiled in a scandal involving the British newspaper *The Daily Telegraph*. Wilhelm gave an interview to his friend Colonel Edward James Montagu-Stuart-Wortley in 1908. "You English [are]mad as March hares," he began. "What has come over you that you are so completely given over to suspicions quite unworthy of a great nation?" He continued.

"The prevailing sentiment among large sections of the middle and lower classes of my own people is not friendly to England."

The interview increased the suspicion in Britain that he was scheming against them, while back home there was a sense that Wilhelm had embarked on personal rule, a major turning point in his abandonment of the political system in favour of the military. There can be little doubt that the kaiser's antagonistic policies towards Britain heightened tensions in the lead up to 1914 and were motivated by his own personal grievances.

VERDICT: GUILTY

HOW THE REICH WAS RUN

WHAT WAS THE KAISER'S ROLE IN GERMAN POLITICS?

THE KAISER

The kaiser's role was vague and ambiguous, allowing Wilhelm to usually get his way. The kaiser alone had the power to interpret the constitution and, as head of the army, had control over foreign policy. He could declare martial law as well as dismiss or appoint the Reichstag and chancellor.

MILITARY

Article 63 of the constitution stated that the army was answerable to the emperor, but Article 60 declared they were subordinate to the Reichstag, leading to tensions between the two. Army Bills starting in 1892 expanded the forces significantly, while a new Army League began producing propaganda to convince the public of the merits of a strong army, whatever the cost.

THE CHANCELLOR

As the premier of Germany, the chancellor could technically be appointed by the parliament, but this rarely happened. The chancellor did not need to command the majority of either house. Bismarck, as architect of the constitution, manipulated the void between parliament and monarch to ensure that he came out on top until Wilhelm forced him to resign.

THE BUNDESRAT

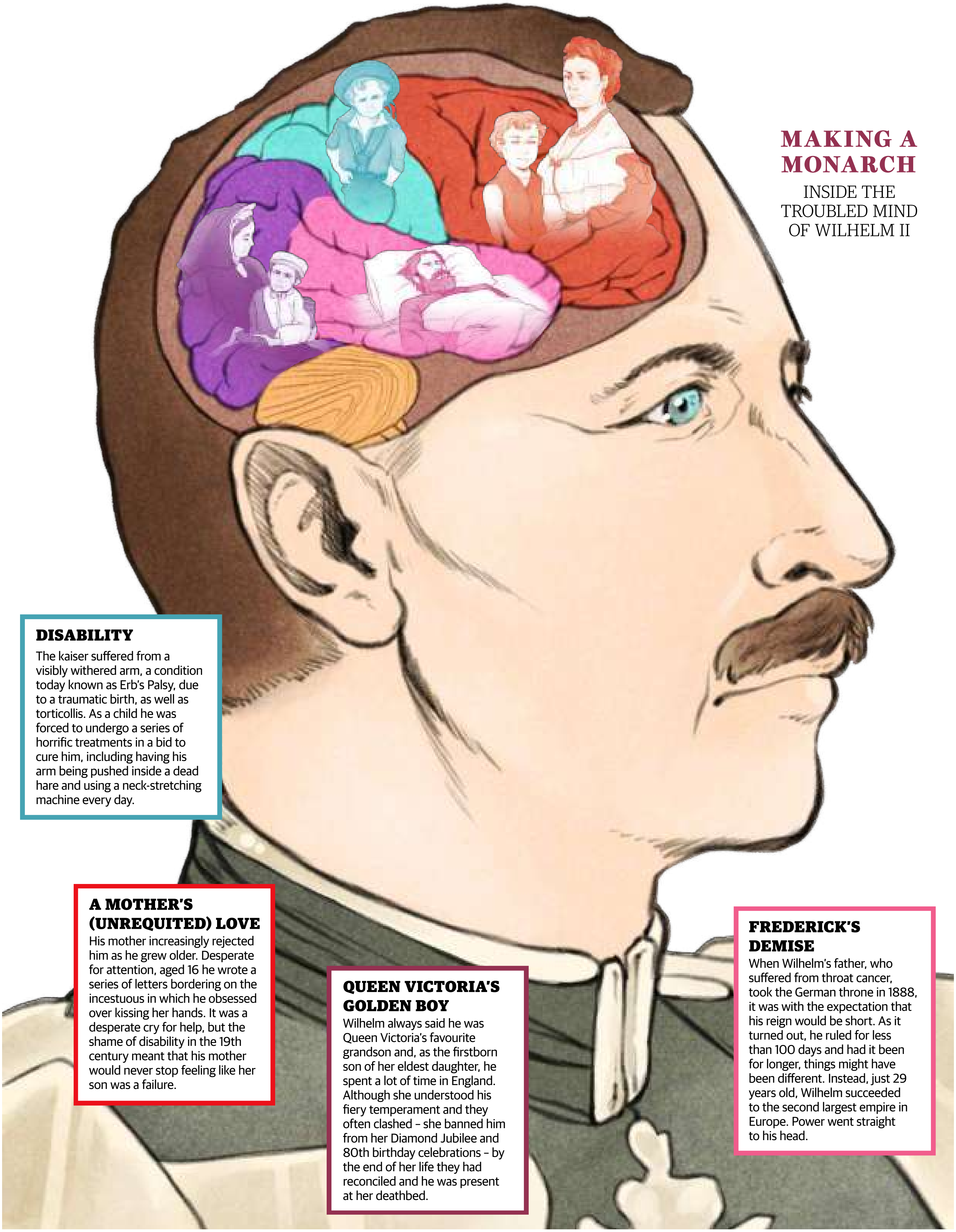
Germany's political system was complex because it was designed to incorporate all 25 of the principalities and kingdoms that formed the empire, but, in reality, Prussia dominated. In the powerful upper house, the Bundesrat (or Federal Council), there were 58 votes. Prussia had 17 and Bavaria had six, while Sachse and Württemberg had four. The rest were shared out among the smaller kingdoms, each having just one vote on average.

THE REICHSTAG

The lower house was the only German institution that was democratically elected. Using single member constituencies, there were 397 seats. The Reichstag could introduce new laws and vote on them, but it was the weakest of the two houses and, unlike the British system, the chancellor and the executive did not need to command a majority here – only the confidence of the kaiser.

MAKING A MONARCH

INSIDE THE TROUBLED MIND OF WILHELM II



DISABILITY

The kaiser suffered from a visibly withered arm, a condition today known as Erb's Palsy, due to a traumatic birth, as well as torticollis. As a child he was forced to undergo a series of horrific treatments in a bid to cure him, including having his arm being pushed inside a dead hare and using a neck-stretching machine every day.

A MOTHER'S (UNREQUITED) LOVE

His mother increasingly rejected him as he grew older. Desperate for attention, aged 16 he wrote a series of letters bordering on the incestuous in which he obsessed over kissing her hands. It was a desperate cry for help, but the shame of disability in the 19th century meant that his mother would never stop feeling like her son was a failure.

QUEEN VICTORIA'S GOLDEN BOY

Wilhelm always said he was Queen Victoria's favourite grandson and, as the firstborn son of her eldest daughter, he spent a lot of time in England. Although she understood his fiery temperament and they often clashed – she banned him from her Diamond Jubilee and 80th birthday celebrations – by the end of her life they had reconciled and he was present at her deathbed.

FREDERICK'S DEMISE

When Wilhelm's father, who suffered from throat cancer, took the German throne in 1888, it was with the expectation that his reign would be short. As it turned out, he ruled for less than 100 days and had it been for longer, things might have been different. Instead, just 29 years old, Wilhelm succeeded to the second largest empire in Europe. Power went straight to his head.

ACCUSATION 2:

HE RESENTED DEMOCRACY

Wilhelm's father, Frederick III, had been an enthusiastic liberal with plans to revise the democratic structures of the empire while his grandfather, Wilhelm I, had been a reluctant reformer spurred on by a desire to stop Germany from descending back into the revolutions it had experienced in 1848. Wilhelm II, however, was anything but a reformer. Addressing a meeting of labourers from the Rhine, he said that "the Reich has one ruler and I am he" - a mantra he clearly stood by throughout his reign.

His very first act as kaiser was to surround the Neues Palais at Potsdam, where his father had just taken his last breath. He had all the gates locked while his soldiers ransacked every room looking for evidence of a 'plot', which involved his mother and father attempting to reduce the power of the monarchy. Nothing was found - any notes that may have incriminated them had already been stored safely in Buckingham Palace before Frederick had died. The Minister of Justice reminded the new kaiser that this was not the appropriate behaviour of a modern monarch. Not that Wilhelm took any notice.

Wilhelm also resented the social democratic and left wing movements that wanted reform and their increasing presence in the Reichstag simply made him more determined to ignore his parliament. When coal miners went on strike in Essen in 1889, Wilhelm - in his usual blunt and erratic way - remarked that if the strikers were in any way linked to the Social Democrats, he'd have them all shot, much to his mother's increasing dismay.

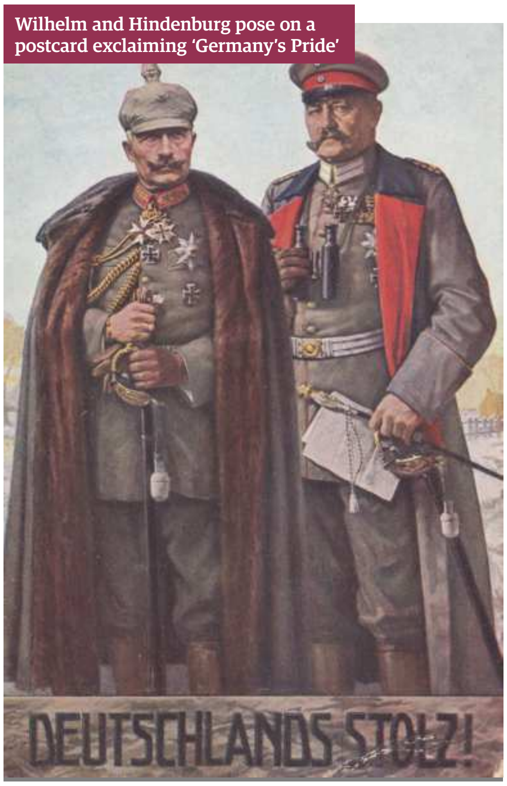
But while it is clear that the kaiser resented democracy, it is arguable that he himself was not to blame for the lack of Germany's democratic structures that were ultimately unable to hold him and his generals to account, thus setting the events of 1914 in motion. Suppression of the reformist Social Democrats, one of the largest blocs in parliament, through the Anti-Socialist Laws dated back to the reign of Wilhelm I. Wilhelm II let this legislation lapse, though perhaps only as a politically expedient way of seeing off Bismarck, who had been their chief architect.

Wilhelm, however, was savvier than many people think. Because the kaiser's role was not properly defined by the 1871 constitution, it allowed him to appoint the chancellor. Strong men like Bismarck were a threat to his authority and had to be pushed out, while weaker men like Bernhard von Bülow could be manipulated by the Reichstag, and this in turn might make him look weak, gifting parliament more power. Wilhelm "preferred to rule with mediocrities", as we can see with his appointment of the nitpicking Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg as Bülow's replacement.

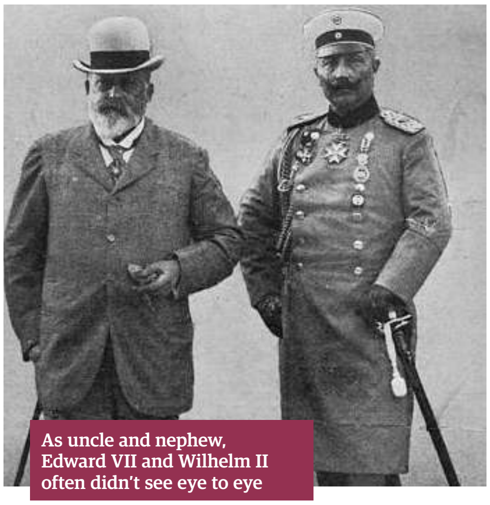
We can also see the extent to which Wilhelm manipulated the Reichstag when we consider Tirpitiz's naval expansion bills, which were amended gradually rather than all at once. Parliament was unlikely to have approved them if they had been introduced in one go, even though it was undoubtedly the kaiser's true intention to expand the navy to 1914 levels from the start. Yet once the bills were approved, they were binding and unalterable - even if this wasn't quite autocracy, it was wafer-thin democracy. Without effective democratic scrutiny to pull him back from the brink, and with a hatred for any watering down of his powers, Wilhelm helped plunge Germany into war.

VERDICT: GUILTY

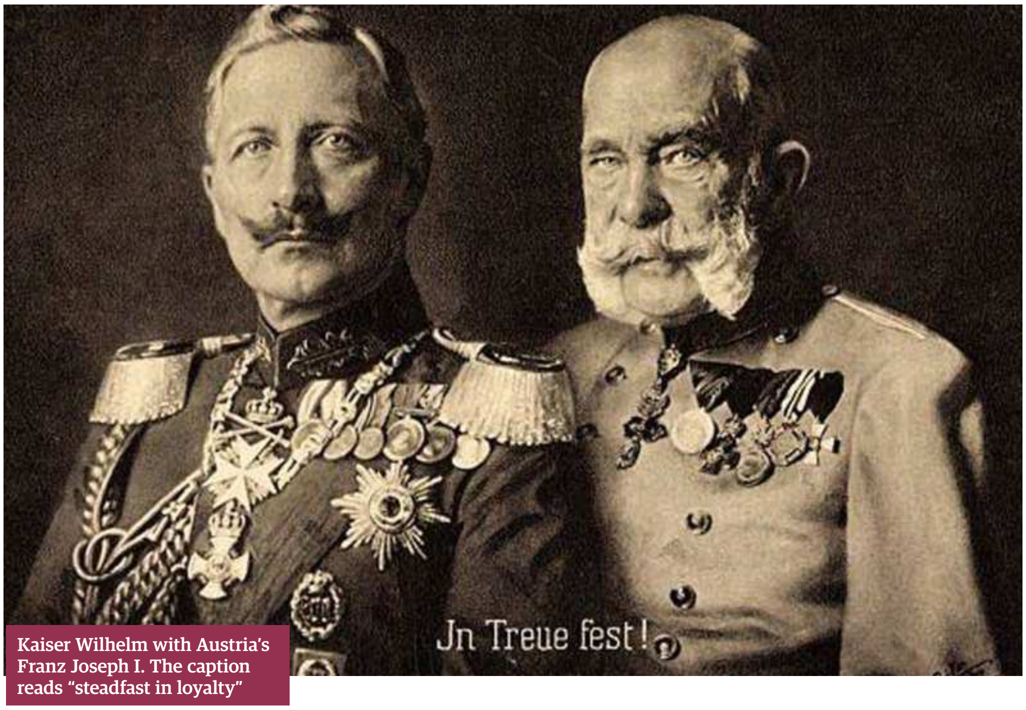
An adolescent Wilhelm with his parents and siblings. He stands second from the right


DEUTSCHLANDS STOLZ!
Wilhelm and Hindenburg pose on a postcard exclaiming 'Germany's Pride'

Wilhelm often hid his arm in photographs



As uncle and nephew, Edward VII and Wilhelm II often didn't see eye to eye



Jn Treue fest!

Kaiser Wilhelm with Austria's Franz Joseph I. The caption reads "steadfast in loyalty"

The kaiser and his first wife, Auguste Viktoria, taken in c.1910

Wilhelm awarding medals to soldiers in World War I

ACCUSATION 3:

HE HAD FAVOURITES

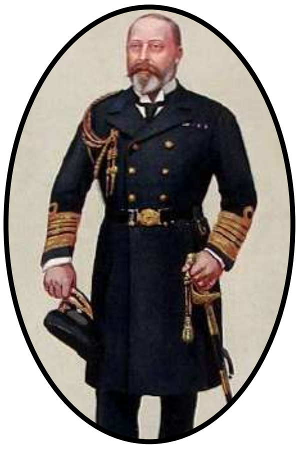
The kaiser's desire to rule like an absolute monarch was by no means confined to just his attitude towards his parliament. He made the common historic mistake of relying too heavily on his favourites, a small group of 20 or so influential socialites known as the Liebenberg Circle. The leading light was a German prince, Philipp zu Eulenburg, who Wilhelm first met in May 1886. By the time Wilhelm had acceded to the German throne in 1888, Eulenburg held sway over the appointments of chancellors, ministers and diplomats - and he made sure that his closest friends were duly promoted.

We know that Eulenburg shared the kaiser's fear of so-called 'democratic extremism' and believed in Wilhelm's personal rule, but he also understood that this idea was unacceptable to the liberal elite. Consequently, he helped Wilhelm manipulate the democratic structures for his own ends. Eulenberg meddled even more in February 1897 when he persuaded the kaiser not to intervene in a struggle between the Greeks and the Turks over the island of Crete. While both of them would have liked nothing better than to have demonstrated the might and force of the German Navy, holding back through non-intervention, as Eulenburg successfully managed to argue, helped to reassure the Reichstag about the kaiser's intent and made his long-term expansionism plan more successful.

Eulenburg was finally brought down when the German magazine *Die Zukunft*, spurred on by ministers who wanted to see the back of him, published allegations that he was gay - a serious accusation as homosexuality was actually illegal at the time. It came as a huge blow to the kaiser as the incident occurred at the height of his own crisis with *The Daily Telegraph*, leaving him isolated and resentful towards the majority of his ministers.

With Eulenburg's demise, Wilhelm had to find others to rely on and began to favour his military

UNHAPPY FAMILIES WILHELM'S TWISTED FAMILY TREE SOWED THE SEEDS OF CONFLICT



EDWARD VII OF BRITAIN

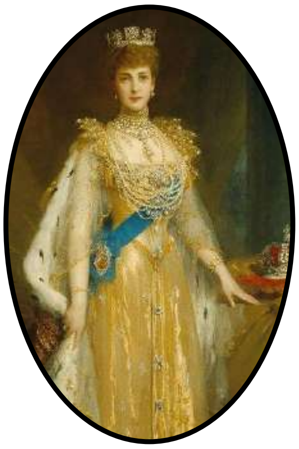
Wilhelm's uncle – 'Fat Old Wales', as the kaiser liked to called him – was his biggest rival at Cowes. Wilhelm once remarked that he and Edward were so diametrically opposed that "it was scarcely to be expected that anything like a cordial friendship would exist between us." Edward's accession to the British throne in 1901 significantly soured relations between England and Germany as Queen Victoria had always managed to mediate Wilhelm. The animosity that the kaiser felt for his uncle seems to stem from his anger and feelings of abandonment felt towards his mother, Vicky, who was Edward's elder sister and close confidante.

NICHOLAS II OF RUSSIA

While 'Nicky' had all the power in Russia that Wilhelm so craved – 'autocrat' was not so much an aspiration but an official part of his title as 'Emperor and Autocrat of all Russians' – the two were very different people. Nicholas adored his family and, although he could be tetchy, usually resorted to reason. On the eve of war, the cousins exchanged telegrams and Nicholas pleaded with Wilhelm to acknowledge the gravitas of the situation and reconsider his decision to support Austria-Hungary, knowing the casualties it would cause and foreseeing that soon he may be "overwhelmed by the pressure forced upon me and be forced to take extreme measures."

GEORGE V OF BRITAIN

Wilhelm was glad when his cousin George succeeded 'Fat Old Wales' to the British throne – not because he had much respect for him, but because he no doubt considered him a pushover, a "homebody" as he once said, somebody who was unadventurous. Indeed, George was an avid stamp collector and found grand occasions like the state opening of Parliament a "terrible ordeal". George also did what Wilhelm considered unthinkable: he allowed the powers of the monarchy and the Lords to be gradually conceded to the House of Commons as the Liberals continued with a radical social and constitutional reform agenda under Prime Minister Asquith.



QUEEN ALEXANDRA OF DENMARK

Edward VII's Danish wife, Alexandra, had her own axe to grind with Germany. In 1864, Prussian forces captured and annexed the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, resulting in the loss of 40 per cent of Danish territory. There was a suggestion that had Kaiser Frederick III lived longer, he would have given Alsace-Lorraine, captured during the Franco-Prussian War, back to France and perhaps even Schleswig and Holstein to Denmark as well. At Frederick's funeral Edward asked Wilhelm, on his wife's behalf, about whether this was true and the kaiser took great offence. It cemented his view that Britain should be considered the enemy.

entourage, which consisted of chiefs of staff and the military cabinet chiefs. The relative power of each position depended on how much the incumbent was favoured by the kaiser, and in the 1880s it was Chief of Staff General Alfred von Waldersee who was the firm favourite. However, his successor, General Alfred von Schlieffen, was sidelined for the cabinet chief Wilhelm von Hahnke in the 1890s.

Both Eulenburg and Wilhelm's army chiefs did little to stop the besieged monarch in his catastrophic tracks, with both of them actively encouraging his warmongering and expansionist policies that would come to have devastating and far-reaching consequences just a few years later in 1914.

VERDICT: GUILTY

The leaders of the four central powers in 1916: Wilhelm, Tsar Ferdinand I of Bulgaria, Sultan Mehmed V of the Ottoman Empire and Emperor Charles I of Austria-Hungary

Treue Verbündete!

THE KAISER'S CRONIES

THE GENERALS AND ADVISORS WHO HAD WILHELM'S EAR

OTTO VON BISMARCK

(1815-98)

Prime minister of Prussia from 1862, he embarked on a series of successful nationalistic wars to provoke German unification. As the 'Iron Chancellor' of the empire, he was a fiscal conservative but pursued pragmatism over ideology to remain in power. Perhaps inevitably, due to the powerful position he had created for himself, Wilhelm dismissed him in 1890.

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW

(1849-1929)

Foreign minister from 1897 and then chancellor from 1900, Bülow supported the kaiser's imperialistic ambitions and championed Austria's invasion of Bosnia and Herzegovina. His role in the *Daily Telegraph* scandal left him at odds with the Kaiser. He resigned in July 1909 after failing to pass a fiscal reform bill.

THEOBALD VON BETHMANN-HOLLWEG

(1856-1921)

According to Christopher Clark, Bülow's successor had a "predilection for observing correct procedure" and was "pedantic". At first this irritated Wilhelm. Bethmann-Hollweg was not the 'yes man' he craved, but over time it soon became apparent that he was an ineffective politician who could not control the Reichstag, a power vacuum the kaiser gladly filled.

ALFRED VON TIRPITZ

(1849-1930)

Secretary of state of the Imperial Navy from 1897, Tirpitz was in charge of the Kaiser's most prized project. His two Fleet Acts set 1917 as the target year for the building of two flagships, 36 battleships, 11 large cruisers and 34 small cruisers, though he ultimately failed as Britain outnumbered Germany's battleships by 20 in 1914.

HELMUTH VON MOLTKE THE YOUNGER

(1848-1916)

Moltke, from a distinguished military family, rose rapidly to become the chief of army staff in 1906. Hungry for war but incompetent, he was responsible for arguably the greatest miscalculation in military history – the belief that Great Britain would not come to the aid of Belgium when Germany enacted the Schlieffen Plan and invaded France through Belgium.

ERICH LUDENDORFF

(1865-1937)

General Ludendorfff was perhaps the biggest cheerleader for war. He broke with the tradition of political neutrality for members of the army by campaigning for rearmament and military expansion. With his ally and superior, Hindenburg, he held a domineering position over Wilhelm during the war, particularly after they secured victories at Tannenberg and the Masurian Lakes.

ACCUSATION 4:

HE WAS HUNGRY FOR WAR

There can be little doubt that the army became a political force under Wilhelm, with generals holding more sway over policy than any minister. General Helmuth von Moltke the Younger, chief of the general staff at the outbreak of World War I, said of war, "The sooner the better." A meeting convened by Wilhelm with his generals in December 1912, of which no minutes were kept, is one of the most contested pieces of evidence in apportioning blame for 1914 as it resulted in a massive expansion of the German Army and Navy. The conference could have just been natural

Wilhelm had seven children with his first wife, Princess Augusta Viktoria planning for heightening tensions in Europe - the Balkan Wars had begun in October - or a 'smoking gun' that proves the Kaiser was making preparations for a pre-meditated conflict.

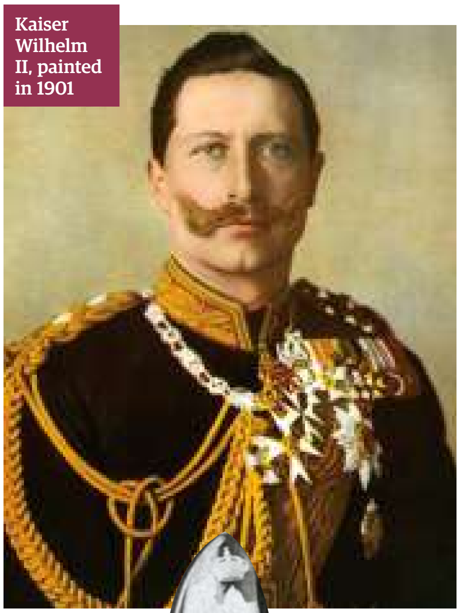
It is also striking that after Wilhelm's abdication and the formation of the Weimar Republic in 1918, ex-soldiers launched the Kapp Putsch in 1920 with the aim of toppling the republican government and bringing back the monarchy. Their loyalty to their kaiser - even after Germany had been defeated - suggests that the army had become politicised and that it should be the military as much as Wilhelm being held to account.

Those trying to exonerate Wilhelm arguably point to their own damning evidence. After the assassination of Franz Ferdinand, Austria-Hungary sent Serbia an ultimatum if war was to be avoided, and Serbia engaged, accepting some of the proposals while compromising on others. Wilhelm said that Serbia's response was a "capitulation of the most humiliating kind" and "any reason for war has now been eliminated". These views, however, were not passed on to Austria-Hungary. Perhaps it could be claimed that the kaiser had surrounded himself with warmongers who were now ignoring his instructions and were out of control.

Although it is certainly true that German military aggression was a key factor in the start of the war, we must consider that other countries were preparing for battles to expand their own borders. In the mind of Tsar Nicholas II, war was the patriotic cause Russia needed to bring his country together after years of unrest. Austria-Hungary had been on a war footing since at least 1906 as Emperor Franz Josef expanded into the Adriatic. When Serbia did not completely commit to all the stipulations of the ultimatum, there were cheering crowds on the streets of Austria-Hungary. In total there were 20 million regular and reservist soldiers across Europe - militarisation was by no means confined to Germany.

Whether Wilhelm alone is guilty of warmongering is impossible to establish. Given the kaiser's propensity for ranting and raving, hyperbole and empty threats, how can we take anything he said at face value?

VERDICT:
SHARED GUILT



Kaiser Wilhelm II, painted in 1901

Prince Wilhelm aged 15. He became kaiser 13 years later

©wiki. Kogel Atelier

PRINCE FRANZ OF BAVARIA

The third son of Bavarian King Ludwig III, Prince Franz achieved important victories for the Central Powers in France and Belgium

WRITTEN BY GREG KING

In August 1914 Prince Franz, the 38-year-old third son of Bavaria's King Ludwig III, kissed his wife Princess Isabella of Croÿ and his two children farewell and went off to war. Holding the rank of General, the prince had spent much of his life in the military, commanding successive infantry regiments. At the beginning of the war Franz had charge of the 2nd Bavarian Infantry Brigade when he and his 19,000 men marched off to France. Less than a month after deploying, the prince was shot and slightly wounded at Vermandovilers. He quickly recovered, and his father named him a Major General on 10 September. A few months later, Franz was named commander of the 3rd Bavarian Infantry Brigade; in April 1915, the regiment was renamed the 4th Infantry and fought in France and Belgium through the rest of the year.

In 1916, the 4th Bavarian Infantry Brigade swept slowly across France engaging in battles, but its first significant victory came in 1916 when it helped capture Fort Douaumont, one of 19 fortresses erected to protect the city of Verdun. The fort, which had previously boasted a number of rotating guns, had been stripped of all but two, a 155mm and a 75mm gun. This made the fort vulnerable, especially as it was manned by a skeleton staff of middle-aged reservists. On 24 February 1916, the Bavarians joined other German troops, surrounded the fortress, and laid siege, taking parts of it, only for the French to reclaim some redoubts: on 23 May Franz led his men storming the fort. Within a day, Douaumont fell, a heavy blow to French morale. In recognition of his "extraordinary energy and personal bravery," King Ludwig III awarded his son the Knight's Cross of the Order of Max Josef, the country's highest military honour, on 25 May 1916.

These were anxious days. When the division was resting, Franz managed to travel back to Munich and temporarily reunite with his wife. In 1917, while Franz was away at the front, Isabella gave birth to their third child, Princess Adelgunde; a year later there was another princess, Eleonore. Each time he left his family Franz never knew if he would return; having already been wounded, he knew that danger was ever-present, but he was determined to share the hardships of his troops.

The Bavarians' next major battle took place at Passchendaele, a Belgian village in Flanders. The Germans wanted to capture the Belgian city of Ypres and launched a counter-offensive against the Allies in July 1917. This proved an altogether

Prince Franz with some of his siblings

different experience from Fort Douaumont and a long and drawn-out battle. In autumn 1914 the Germans had tried to take the city and failed, resulting in some 160,000 casualties. Fighting was heavy, with British troops reinforcing their French comrades, and after several months it seemed likely that German forces would be forced to withdraw. But the Allied efforts were often haphazard and the Bavarians, who had been stationed to guard the sector northwest of Armentières, formed a 25-mile line around the city. In June the British attacked along the Messines Ridge, and the Bavarians suffered heavy losses, including some 200 men who were taken prisoner. Needing time to regroup and replenish, the 4th Bavarian Infantry Brigade temporarily withdrew to rest near Audenarde.

By the first week of July 1917, the 4th Bavarian Infantry Brigade was back in action, stationed along the southeastern edge of Armentières. On 31 July, when the British attacked, the Germans managed to drive them back. Ten days later, the Bavarian infantry attacked and recaptured a significant portion of Glencorse Wood. But on 15 August the Allies, their numbers bolstered by newly arrived Canadian troops, made substantial gains in retaking the area. Efforts by the Bavarian infantry to advance were futile as the war of attrition played itself out, aided when the British temporarily halted operations owing to bad weather. Heavy casualties and captures depleted the German ranks but they fought on through September, constantly attacking and bombarding the British positions with heavy artillery. But the Bavarians were largely cut off and could not reinforce their numbers; the brigade lost nearly 30 per cent of its men, and was forced to withdraw to a line between Zonnebeke and Passchendaele northeast of Ypres. Thinking that they could hold the area near Passchendaele Ridge, the Germans waited uneasily for the next Allied move. On 4 October, the British launched an assault at Broodseinde Ridge. Depleted and lacking sufficient arms, the Germans were overwhelmed and forced into retreat. Over the next week, the Germans lost some 38,000 men as Canadian troops relentlessly drove them back. By the middle of November the situation seemed hopeless. Fighting would continue off and on, but the Germans lost some 200,000 men. The 4th Bavarian Infantry Brigade had been reduced from 19,000 to some 1,000 men.

The 4th Bavarian Infantry remained in Flanders through Christmas and into 1918 but its ranks had been depleted again. It saw more action in the Champagne region, participating in battles in the Argonne Forest launched by the Allies. In March

> “HAVING ALREADY BEEN WOUNDED, HE KNEW THAT DANGER WAS EVER-PRESENT, BUT HE WAS DETERMINED TO SHARE THE HARDSHIPS OF HIS TROOPS”

German infantry in the forest around Kemmelberg

the brigade left the Thiaucourt sector and was deployed near Bailleul. Replenished with fresh recruits, in April 1918 the 4th Bavarian Infantry joined in the attack on Kemmelberg, a fortified hillside in Flanders then held by the French. This was part of a German offensive planned as Operation Georg, with the idea of capturing Ypres and cutting off British forces from their supply lines running through the English Channel. Using heavy artillery and gas grenades, the Germans laid siege; the French army suffered heavy casualties and the British troops were in a desperate situation. Mile by mile, the land fell as the Germans swept forward as Allied troops retreated. On 17 April, the Bavarians joined other German troops in attacking Kemmelberg; temporarily repulsed by British firepower, they regrouped and planned a new attack. On the night of 25 April the Bavarians joined the Fourth German Army in an assault on the fortress.

The following day Kemmelberg fell, and the triumphant Germans established a new field headquarters in the town. Hearing the news, King Ludwig III named Franz the recipient of the Commander's Cross of the Bavarian Order of Max Josef. But as Allied reinforcements arrived, the German situation became desperate: counter-assaults led to significant casualties and on 29 April the German High Command called off Operation Georg.

Franz had led his men well, although every apparent triumph soon vanished under superior Allied manpower. The German High Command was often in disarray, and strategies came and went without reason. Recognising this, Kaiser Wilhelm II awarded Prince Franz the Order Pour le Mérite on 16 May 1918.

In June 1918, the brigade was sent to a line near Merris, where it suffered heavy losses over the next few weeks. On 25 August the Bavarians fought Allied troops north of Bapaume, but again the losses were heavy. In addition to casualties, some 1,600 soldiers were taken prisoner. Left in tatters, the division was reassigned to the Italian front, deployed along the southern Bavarian border and in the Tyrol. Their role was largely confined to patrolling the borders with Austria-Hungary and with Italy; although German soldiers advanced south, the Bavarians remained in a policing role, unable to join in the fighting. It was here, in November 1918, that Franz learned revolution had broken out in Munich. His father had been forced to flee to Austria, where he became the first German sovereign to abdicate his throne. Within a week, the kaiser, too, was gone, and the Great War came to its end.

BAVARIA UNDER PRUSSIAN DOMINATION

IN THE GERMAN EMPIRE BAVARIA ENJOYED A UNIQUE AUTONOMY THAT VANISHED WHEN WAR BROKE OUT

The Kingdom of Bavaria and its army occupied a unique position in the German Empire as World War I began. After the Franco-Prussian War, Prussia's famed iron chancellor Otto von Bismarck consolidated power, but he needed Bavaria's acquiescence to create the new Empire. In exchange for King Ludwig II's promise to support the elevation of the King of Prussia to the rank of German Emperor, Bismarck promised that Bavaria could maintain a large degree of autonomy, including an independent army. Only during times of war would Bavarian troops come under Prussian control. In 1914, Bavaria boasted an army of some 83,000 men; by treaty, they now fell under Berlin's authority. King Ludwig III named his eldest son Crown Prince Rupprecht (Prince Franz's brother) as commander of the country's forces and thereafter the country's soldiers worked in cooperation, not subjugation, with Prussia.

© Getty

Franz was the third son of Bavaria's King Ludwig III

THE KING WHO DEFIED THE KAISER

As Europe inched towards the abyss of war, Belgium's monarch was offered a stark choice by Germany. His courageous actions changed history forever…

WRITTEN BY NICK SOLDINGER

On the morning of 2 August 1914, Claus von Below-Saleske, the German Ambassador in Brussels, delivered the following ultimatum to the Belgian government:

"Very Confidential

Reliable information has been received by the German Government that French forces intend to… march through Belgian territory against Germany.

It is essential for the self-defence of Germany that she should anticipate any such hostile attack and Germany [therefore must], for her own protection, enter Belgian territory.

This is no act of hostility against Belgium. In the event of Belgium being prepared in the coming war to maintain an attitude of friendly neutrality towards Germany, the German Government bind themselves to evacuating Belgian territory on the conclusion of peace.

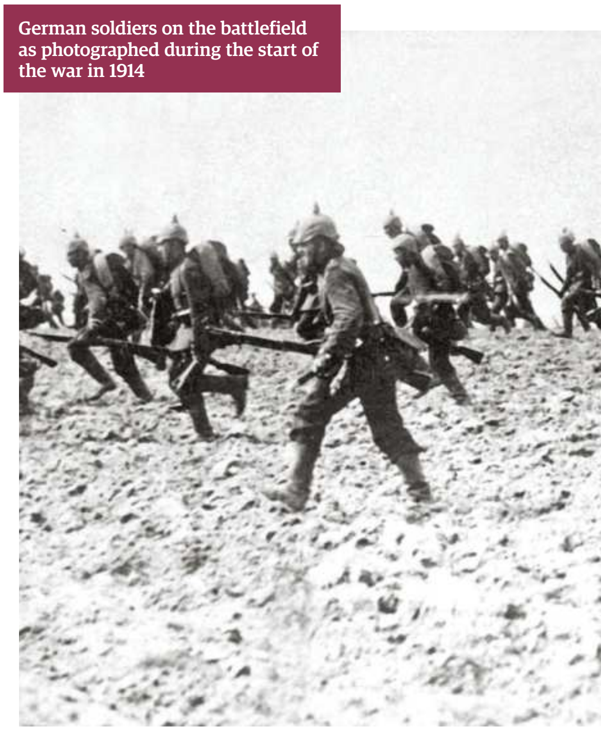
Should Belgium oppose German troops, [however], Germany will be compelled to consider Belgium as an enemy."

Just a month before it was issued, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, Arch-Duke Franz Ferdinand, had been murdered. A pan-continental conflict was now brewing between Britain, France and Russia on one side and Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire on the other. Belgium, whose neutrality and independence was enshrined in international treaties recognised by both sides, and under the guidance of its king, Albert I, had done whatever it could to stay out of it. With war now seemingly inevitable, however, Belgium found itself very much in the way. Germany had already marched into Luxembourg to get its forces within striking distance of France, and - in the giant game of Risk that Germany's Kaiser Wilhelm II was now playing - Belgium looked like it would be next on his list.

The kaiser must have figured he was onto a sure thing. By 1914, he'd built an army of around 1.3 million men, and had made no secret of his imperial ambitions. He wanted an empire that matched the might and influence of Britain's, and he'd do anything to get it. And if Albert and his Belgian subjects wouldn't be intimidated into

© Getty Images, Alamy

Albert married Elisabeth of Bavaria in 1900



German soldiers on the battlefield as photographed during the start of the war in 1914

submission, then he'd have to smash them into it. Besides, what serious opposition could this tiny country mount? It had an army of just 237,000 that was, compared to the German forces, locked in the past.

It was true. For years Albert had tried to strengthen Belgium's army. He was no warmonger - he was a deeply moral leader who'd done much to improve the lot of his subjects - but he was no fool either. The world was heading towards hell and he'd known it for some time, long pleading with his country's politicians to create a fighting force that could protect its borders.

His requests, however, fell mostly on deaf ears. In 1912, his generals told him that, at the current rate of modernisation, the earliest they could get Belgium's army ready for a major conflict would be 1918. War, however, was not going to wait that long. It was now on the Belgians' doorstep with a battering ram and Albert had two clear choices - either cave in or fight.

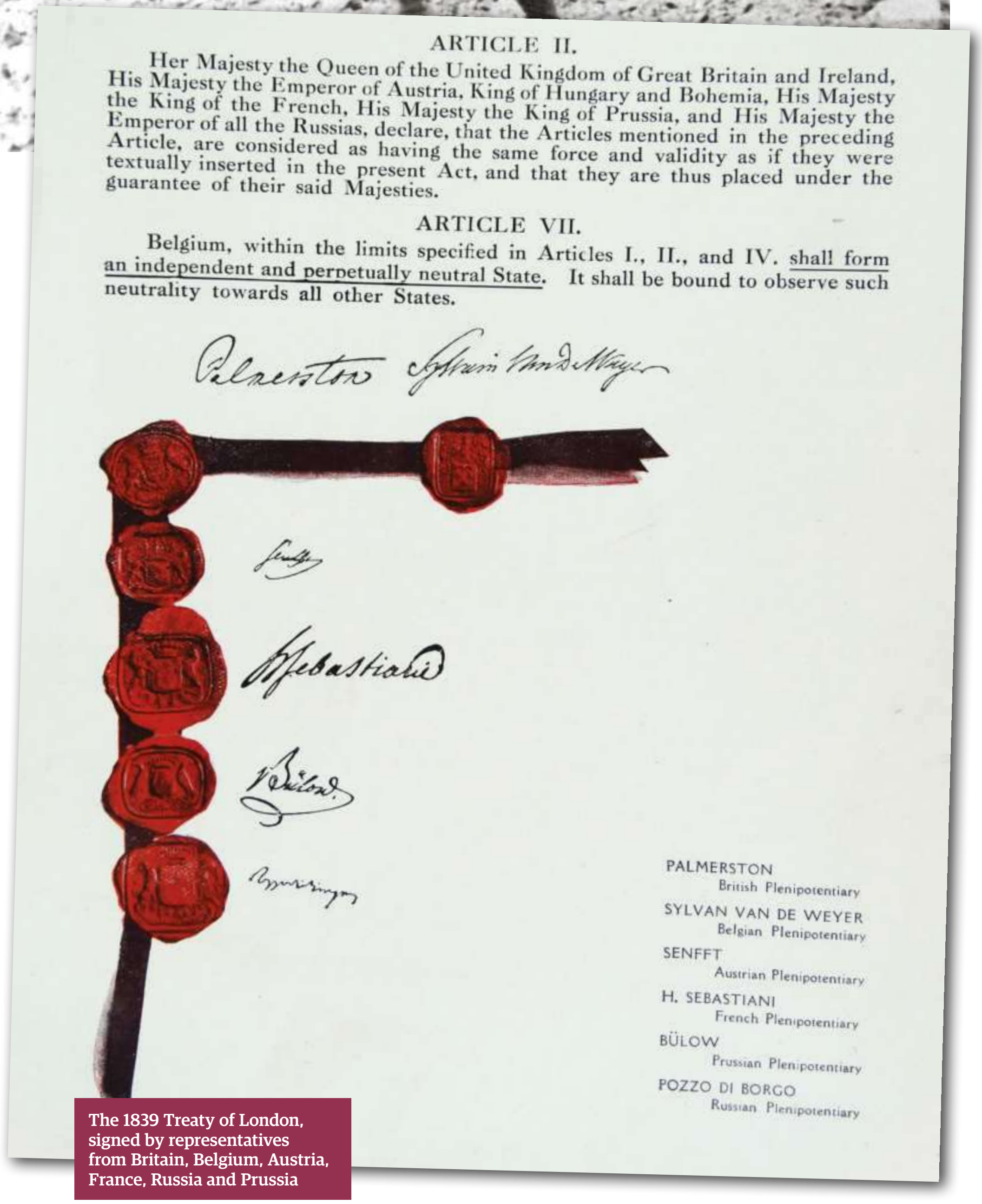
"Belgium is a nation, not a road," he told his advisers in response to the kaiser's demands. He then addressed the Belgian Parliament, explaining the situation as he saw it: "If the foreigner in defiance of our neutrality, whose demands we have always scrupulously observed, violates our territory, he will find all the Belgians gathered about their sovereign, who will never betray his constitutional oath… I have faith in our destinies; a country which is defending itself conquers the respect of all; such a country does not perish! It is the moment for action. No one in this country will fail in his duty!" On 2 August, Albert rejected the German ultimatum. The following day the kaiser declared war on France and German troops began swarming across the border into Belgium. World War I had begun.

Albert was not born to be king. He was the second son of five siblings in his own family, while his own father was the third son of the first Belgian monarch, King Leopold I. However, tragedy and untimely deaths in the family ensured that by 1891 he was heir to the throne. He was just 16 years old, but he took on the responsibility with admirable maturity. Knowing that he would one day be king, he set about preparing himself for the task not least because the reputation of the Belgian monarchy at the time was so tarnished. In an attempt at imperialising, Albert's predecessor Leopold II had established the Congo Free State in central Africa and between 1885 and 1908 had literally drained the life out of it for personal gain. He siphoned off a huge fortune in natural resources while his forces killed as many as 10 million people in a string of atrocities that caused international outrage. When Albert eventually ascended to the throne in 1909 he was determined to be different. Whereas Leopold II wanted his reign to be remembered for grandeur, Albert was keen to be seen as moderate, hard working and sympathetic to the needs of his subjects. As well as setting a perfect example as a husband and a father, he also set about familiarising himself with every section of Belgian society. He was a deeply religious man yet one with very progressive ideas.

He began studying the problems of his country's poor and to search for solutions that might alleviate their working and living conditions. He also travelled to the Congo to see first-hand the devastation his predecessor had wreaked, presenting a detailed report on his return home on how the lives of his Congolese subjects could be improved and their ravished country repaired. Albert's commitment to duty and deep sense of right and wrong would find its most powerful expression, however, in the wake of the German invasion in 1914.

Belgium was bound to neutrality by an international treaty and had been since its inception in 1831. If Albert had allowed the kaiser to use his country as a stepping-stone on his way to invading France, Belgium would have found itself a de facto ally of Germany. The easier route, of course, would have been to comply with the kaiser's wishes, but Albert was a man of profound principle. Belgium's enforced neutrality was enshrined in law; a law which, as the country's constitutional monarch, he was not prepared to break. With his hand forced, Albert took the extraordinary step of standing up to the kaiser, even though doing so could cost him his kingdom. Unlike his German counterpart - who'd disappear behind his palace walls in Berlin once the killing began - Albert took personal responsibility for his decision to resist, promising to stand shoulder to shoulder with his people. As soon as hostilities started he assumed command of the Belgian army, and despite the overwhelming odds, began to lead a heroic defence of his country.

The German invasion of Belgium on 4 August 1914 was to have far-reaching consequences. The violation of Belgian neutrality was the excuse



ARTICLE II.

Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, His Majesty the Emperor of Austria, King of Hungary and Bohemia, His Majesty the King of the French, His Majesty the King of Prussia, and His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, declare, that the Articles mentioned in the preceding Article, are considered as having the same force and validity as if they were textually inserted in the present Act, and that they are thus placed under the guarantee of their said Majesties.

ARTICLE VII.

Belgium, within the limits specified in Articles I., II., and IV. shall form an independent and perpetually neutral State. It shall be bound to observe such neutrality towards all other States.

Palmerston

H Sebastiani

Bülow

PALMERSTON
British Plenipotentiary
SYLVAN VAN DE WEYER
Belgian Plenipotentiary
SENFFT
Austrian Plenipotentiary
H. SEBASTIANI
French Plenipotentiary
BÜLOW
Prussian Plenipotentiary
POZZO DI BORGO
Russian Plenipotentiary

The 1839 Treaty of London, signed by representatives from Britain, Belgium, Austria, France, Russia and Prussia

A FAMILY AFFAIR

HOW ALBERT'S WIFE AND SON HELPED DEFEND BELGIUM

When German forces overran Belgium at the start of World War I they conquered the entire country save for a strip of land in the country's south west known as Flanders. It became a cauldron of slaughter, as shellfire and poison gas were poured into it. It was here that Albert would spend most of the war, frequently visiting his troops on the front line, experiencing many of the same dangers that they were subjected to.

But Albert wasn't the only member of his family who'd do his bit during the Great War. His wife, Elisabeth – despite being German herself – would also make visits to the Front, handing out cigarettes and chocolates. Her biggest contribution, however, was in helping the wounded. She established a major military hospital in the former Grand Hôtel de l'Ocean in La Panne. She funded the hospital and frequently visited wounded Belgian soldiers there. She also helped organise a fleet of military ambulances to ferry the wounded between the Front and field hospitals. Hugely popular with the Belgian people, by the end of the war she was known as Queen Nurse.

However, as Belgium was plunged into the worst crisis in its 83-year-history, it was the contribution made by Albert's eldest son Prince Leopold, which was perhaps the most remarkable. Although only 14 at the time of the German invasion, he enlisted in the Belgian army as a private against the wishes of both his parents. He served at the Front throughout the early dark days of the war. It was only in 1915, after months of combat, he was finally persuaded that – as Belgium's future king – he needed to finish his education, and went to England to continue his studies. The regiment he served with the 12th Regiment of the Line is the oldest in the Belgian army. It is known to this day as the Prince Leopold Regiment in his honour.

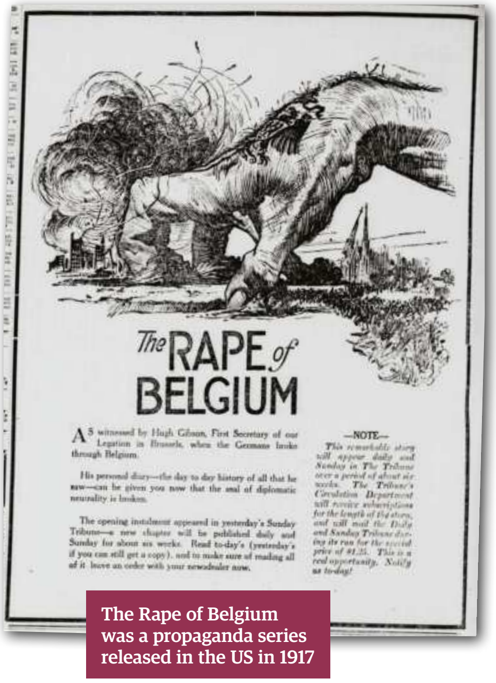
Albert's oldest son, Leopold, seen here in the uniform of a Belgian army private in 1914

Albert visiting troops in the trenches on the Yser

A train fallen from a bridge destroyed in the Battle of the Marne. The battle was considered a great victory for the Allies

Britain had been looking for to join the fight against Germany. And Albert soon found his image being used to whip up support for the war as the UK press called for an army to be raised to help defend plucky little Belgium and their noble solider-king, as his own people adoringly called him. Before the first British troops had even set foot on the continent, however, the bloodbath was in full swing.

The Germans had forecasted that they'd overrun all of Belgium in a matter of days, but Albert had rallied his troops, calling upon them to hold up the German advance for as long as possible. Their response was as costly as it was courageous. On 5 August, advancing German troops encountered their first major obstacle - 12 massive forts that formed a defensive ring around the city of Liège, home to around 40,000 Belgian troops. For the next 12 days this numerically inferior force held out, inflicting considerable casualties on the invaders despite heavy bombardment from German artillery, and the city itself being subject to the world's first-ever aerial bombing when it was attacked by a Zeppelin airship.



The RAPE of BELGIUM

As witnessed by Hugh Gibson, First Secretary of our Legation in Brussels, when the Germans broke through Belgium.

His personal diary—the day to day history of all that he saw—can be given you now that the seal of diplomatic neutrality is broken.

The opening instalment appeared in yesterday's Sunday Tribune—a new chapter will be published daily and Sunday for about six weeks. Read to-day's (yesterday's if you can still get a copy), and to make sure of reading all of it leave an order with your newsdealer now.

—NOTE—

This remarkable story will appear daily and Sunday in The Tribune over a period of about six weeks. The Tribune's Circulation Department will receive subscriptions for the length of the story, and will mail the Daily and Sunday Tribune during its run for the special price of $1.25. This is a real opportunity. Notify us to-day!

The Rape of Belgium was a propaganda series released in the US in 1917

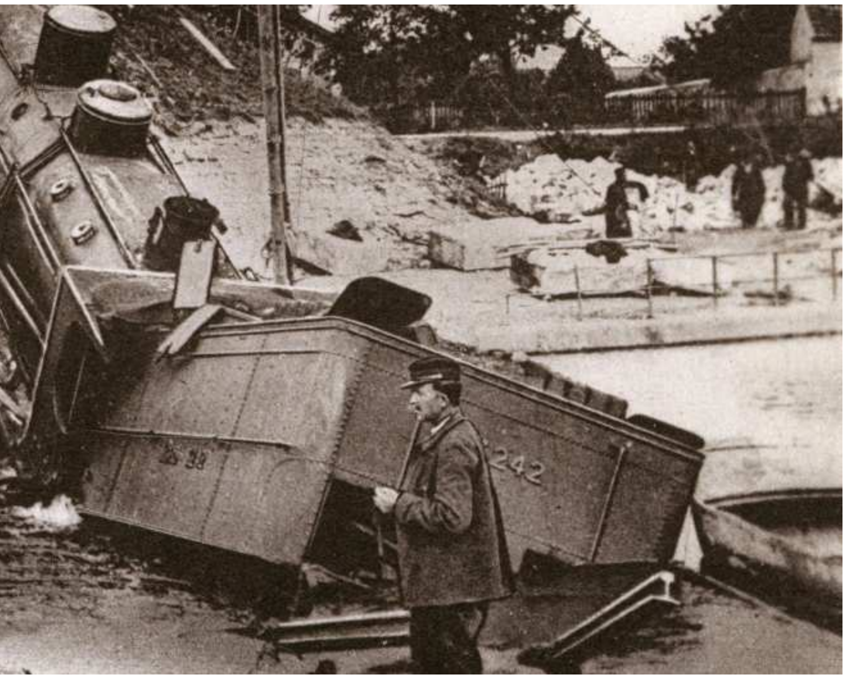
While this heavy force of around 100,000 were being held up at Liège, the kaiser's cavalry units raced ahead into northern and central Belgium. Here they met more Belgian resistance at the small town of Halen, where they'd hoped to secure a bridge over the River Gete. When Belgian engineers only partially destroyed the bridge with dynamite, Belgian troops - again outnumbered - took on the better-equipped Germans and managed to force them back.

The kaiser's superior invasion force was rapidly racking up casualties at a worrying rate against an enemy that, on paper, should have been a pushover. So when Liège eventually fell on 17 August, the kaiser once again appealed to Albert, imploring him to reconsider his position, to accept his original proposal and to spare Belgium what he called "the continuation of the of the horrors of war". Albert's response was typically stoic. "What does he take me for?" he reportedly sighed.

Infuriated by continued Belgian resistance, German soldiers now began committing atrocities against the civilian population including mass shootings, rapes and the torching of entire villages. By the end of August, 5,521 Belgian civilians had been murdered, while the Belgian army had suffered around 30,000 casualties. They had, however, crucially held the Germans up long enough for the French and British to get organised. On 6 September, their forces took on the Germans in what became known as the First Battle of the Marne. This encounter, which lasted a week, effectively halted the German advance into France and marked the start of four years of trench warfare on the Western Front.

By now, the Belgian government - which had abandoned Brussels before it had fallen into German hands on 20 August - had decamped to Le Havre in northern France. Albert, meanwhile, stayed with his troops setting up his headquarters in De Panne on the Belgian coast. German forces now swallowed up all but a small sliver of his kingdom in the far west. And it was here that Albert would remain for the rest of the war, fighting alongside his men - it was rumoured on both sides of the line that German soldiers never shot directly at Albert when he was spotted at the Front, as a mark of respect for a king who'd stuck by his people.

Although he met regularly with his ministers and military advisers, Albert alone took responsibility for all operations in the field for fear that his generals and politicians would try to align the Belgian military too closely with the Allies. Almost from the start, his government had taken the view that Belgium must subordinate itself to the Allied



Like her husband, Elisabeth also visited the troops on the front

crusade, sacrificing itself to the cause if necessary. Albert, however, was determined that his troops would not be used to further the war objectives of his allies.

For France the conflict was an opportunity to avenge its defeat to Germany in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-1 and to recapture lands it had lost then. For the British, coming to the aid of poor little Belgium might have been its official reason for getting involved, but in reality it was all about protecting the Empire – which the kaiser very much had his eye on. No, the Belgian army's sole mandate, Albert insisted, was to liberate its own country from German occupation and to re-establish the nation as independent and neutral state.

He also refused requests from both the British and the French that he place the Belgian army under Allied command, telling them that he was forbidden to do so on constitutional grounds. His real reasons, however, had less to do with political protocol and more to do with his own conscience. "I alone will be held responsible for my country's misfortunes," he wrote in his diary at the start of the war, and as the horror of the conflict unfolded he did whatever he could to protect his people from its worst excesses. Albert was shocked at the way both the French and British leadership fed the lives of an entire generation into the meat grinder of the Western Front, watching on in horror at the senseless slaughter that took place at Verdun, the Somme, and Passchendaele. Instead of committing his troops to big Allied offensives, which would have wiped out the remains of his small army, Albert employed them in a defensive role to protect the part of Flanders they still controlled and the vital seaports they held.

For Albert the priority clearly wasn't just to hold the line. He was desperate to liberate his people who were trapped living under German occupation. But as the war ground on he began to have serious doubts that a military solution would work, harbouring fears that his entire country might be laid to waste by the Allies as they pursued their stated aim of forcing the Germans out of Belgium. So he began exploring the possibility of a diplomatic solution, and in late 1915 agreed to secret discussions with the Germans.

His confidant, Professor Emile Waxweiler, was sent to Zürich to meet with the German diplomat Hans-Veit zu Toerring-Jettenbach, who also just happened to be Albert's brother-in-law. Albert wasn't interested in creating a separate peace with Germany, but he was keen to know what it would take to restore Belgium's independence and territorial integrity. If Belgium didn't need liberating, he figured, the Allies' primary excuse for fighting would no longer exist and maybe, just maybe, all sides could be persuaded to sit around a negotiating table. His hopes, however, were short lived. Waxweiler was killed in a traffic accident in May 1916, and attempts to find a replacement capable of conducting such sensitive negotiations failed largely because his own government had now completely sided with the Allies in the belief that the war must be fought to the bitter end.

As the war raged on and the death toll spiralled, a desperate Albert now made his desire for a peaceful solution to be sought known to his French and British allies. But they were having none of it. The war would be won by crushing Germany, whatever the cost, and his arguments were dismissed as defeatist.

"ALBERT NEVER GOT THE SOLUTION HE BELIEVED POSSIBLE BUT HE STAYED TRUE TO HIS PRINCIPLES"

Albert never got the peaceful solution he believed possible but he stayed true to his principles throughout the war and his army was spared participation in offensive operations. Only at the end of September 1918, as the Allies geared up for their last big push, did he allow his troops to join Army Group Flanders in the liberation of Belgium. Consisting of British, French and Belgian Divisions, Albert successfully led the final offensive, finally freeing his country of German occupation. When he finally re-entered Brussels on 22 November 1918, he was greeted as a hero. The war was over. The kaiser fled to Holland,

THE KING'S MYSTERIOUS DEATH

ACCIDENT OR MURDER? THE CURIOUS CASE OF ALBERT'S UNTIMELY DEMISE

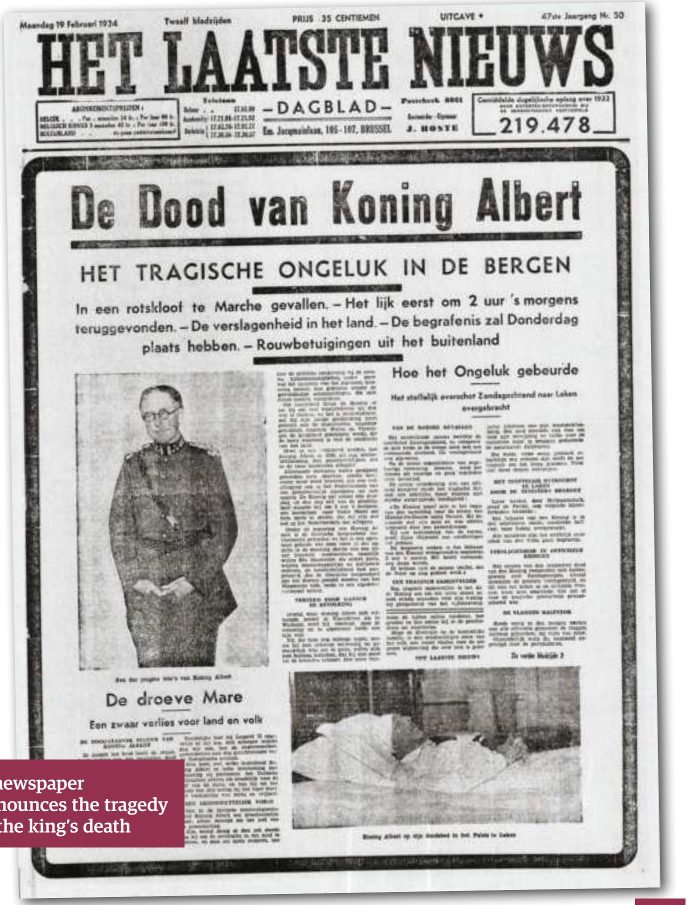
On the morning of 17 February 1934, Albert was driven to Marches-les-Darmes in Ardennes by his valet. The king wanted to tackle a cliff there in preparation for a climbing expedition in the Alps he had planned for later that year. The car was stopped and the valet told to wait as the king set off in the direction of the cliff face. It was the last time anyone would see him alive.

The valet waited all day for the king to return, but when it started to get dark and there was still no sign of him, he called on a nearby aristocrat Baron Edmond Carton de Wiart for assistance, and a search was mounted by local police.

At around 2am, one of the searchers got his foot caught in a rope. Flashlights frantically scoured the darkness and the king's body was found. The other end of the rope still about his waist, and he was bent double at the foot of "a great pinnacle in a little crevasse". There was a massive gash down the left side of his head. He'd apparently fallen 20 metres down a cliff face.

His body was driven to a royal château about 80 kilometres away, before being transferred to Brussels where he was later buried. No autopsy was performed and no official cause of death was entered on his death certificate.

Over a million people are said to have attended his funeral, but even before it was over wild rumours began circulating that the king had been murdered. Some claimedhe was pushed off the top of the cliff by the cuckolded husband of a secret lover claimed some, while others insisted the French Secret Service had assassinated him. With the Germans gearing up for another war, the French could ill-afford to have the man who'd once tried to broker a secret peace deal with the Kaiser on the Belgian throne. Despite the mysterious circumstances surrounding Albert's death, no evidence for either theory has ever come to light.



Maandag 19 Februari 1934 Twaalf bladzijden PRIJS 35 CENTIEMEN UITGAVE • 47ste Jaargang Nr. 50

HET LAATSTE NIEUWS

–DAGBLAD–

Em. Jacqmainlaan, 105-107, BRUSSEL

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J. HOSTE

219.478

De Dood van Koning Albert

HET TRAGISCHE ONGELUK IN DE BERGEN

In een rotskloof te Marche gevallen. – Het lijk eerst om 2 uur 's morgens teruggevonden. – De verslagenheid in het land. – De begrafenis zal Donderdag plaats hebben. – Rouwbetuigingen uit het buitenland

Hoe het Ongeluk gebeurde

Het stoffelijk overschot Zondagochtend naar Laken overgebracht

De droeve Mare

Een zwaar verlies voor land en volk

Koning Albert op zijn doodsbed in het Paleis te Laken

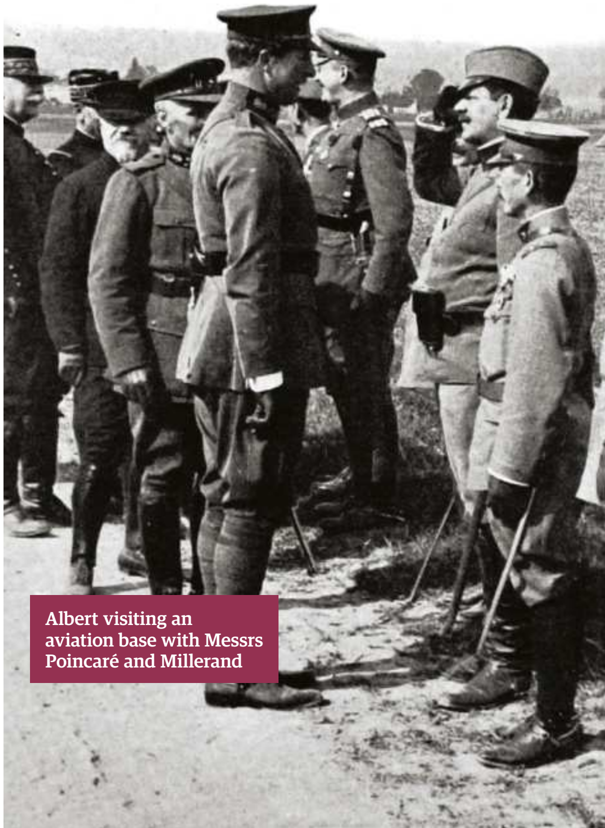
A newspaper announces the tragedy of the king's death

where he'd remain in exile for the rest of his days, and Albert had his kingdom back, along with the peace he'd prayed so hard for.

He now picked up where he'd left off before the slaughter had started, looking for ways to improve the lives of his subjects. Before 1918 was even over, he'd helped establish a three-party government and created universal suffrage in Belgium, extending voting rights to all adult males. The following year he attended the Paris Peace Conference where he met with leaders from Britain, France and the United States. Here he successfully argued to revise the 1839 Treaty of London that had at Belgium's birth established the country's neutrality and underwritten its security with promises of military intervention in the event of an invasion. Never again would Belgium be used as an excuse for the great European powers to unleash their armies on one another.

He also campaigned for clemency where Germany was concerned; strongly advising against a harsh, restrictive treaty designed to curb future German aggression on the grounds that it may prove antagonistic. This voice of reason was once again drowned out by a din of angry voices. Yes, Belgium had been the principle victim of the war, and while the Allies had every sympathy for what it had endured, this was no time for forgiveness. This was a time for vengeance. The Treaty of Versailles, which the Conference subsequently spat out, reflected this, and by imposing its harsh conditions on the defeated Germans the seeds for the next, even more terrible conflict were sown.

He returned to Belgium and spent the next 15 years helping to guide his country through the rebuilding process. WWI had left Belgium



Albert visiting an aviation base with Messrs Poincaré and Millerand shattered and the post-war period saw it blighted by economic crisis and ethnic tensions. Albert helped solve the former by initiating public work programmes to tackle unemployment, redeveloping industries destroyed by the war and, in 1926, by the introduction of a new monetary system. The cultural conflicts – which sprang up between Belgium's Flemish speakers and its Francophone Walloon population – meanwhile, were assuaged with beneficent legislation and by Albert's unifying presence as a leader the nation could rally around. He even changed the family surname in 1920 from the Germanic-sounding Saxe-Coburg-Gotha (just as his relative Britain's King George V had done in 1917) to align himself more closely with his people. Depending on the part of the country he was in he was either Albert de Belgique, or the more Flemish-sounding Albert van België.

The man who had survived so much, however, would not live past middle age. As someone who'd spent his entire life pitting himself against mammoth obstacles, it should come as no surprise to learn that in his down time, Albert liked nothing more than to climb mountains. An experienced and passionate alpinist, the 58-year-old monarch set off alone on 17 February 1934 to tackle Roche du Vieux Bon Dieu at Marches-les-Dames in Ardennes not far from the city of Namur, which almost 20 years before had been a major target for the kaiser's troops. His body was found at the bottom a steep drop the next day and when news of his death was announced, the entire Belgium nation was plunged into mourning. The people had lost their beloved soldier king.

© wiki

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

Princess Margaret of Connaught devoted herself to supporting her country in its time of need

WRITTEN BY JESSICA LEGGETT

A British princess who became the crown princess of Sweden, Margaret of Connaught strived to earn the admiration of her subjects and support her country in its time of need. Today she rightly remains a much celebrated figure in Sweden, recognised for both her tireless charity work and her efforts during the Great War.

Princess Margaret was born on 15 January 1882 at Bagshot Park in Surrey, England. Her father was Arthur, Duke of Connaught, Queen Victoria's favourite son, and her mother was Princess Louise Margaret of Prussia. She was the eldest of three children, and although her full name was Margaret Victoria Charlotte Augusta Norah, the family called her by her nickname, Daisy.

When she was almost two months old, Margaret was baptised by the Archbishop of Canterbury in the Private Chapel of Windsor Castle. Her godparents were Queen Victoria; her paternal aunt Victoria, Princess Royal; her maternal great-granduncle Wilhelm I, Emperor of Germany and her maternal grandparents, Prince and Princess Friedrich Karl of Prussia.

Growing up as a member of the British royal family, Margaret lived with her parents and siblings in Bagshot Park and in Clarence House when they were in London. While her parents were often away on foreign trips on behalf of the queen, Margaret was educated at home, and she also loved to garden. The young princess was even trained in oil painting by Madeleine Fleury, a French impressionist, sparking a love for art that would stay with Margaret for the rest of her life.

In 1893, 11-year-old Margaret was a bridesmaid at the wedding of her cousins, George, Duke of York, and Princess Mary of Teck, at the Chapel Royal, St James's Palace. Five years later she was confirmed in the Private Chapel at Windsor, and just over a week after her 19th birthday in 1901, Queen Victoria passed away.

Margaret was a favourite niece of Victoria's son and successor, King Edward, who believed that she would make an ideal queen consort. In January 1905 the king sent Margaret, her sister Patricia and their parents to Portugal, where they met King Carlos, Queen Maria Amélia and their two sons, Princes Luís Filipe and Manuel. At the time it was rumoured that Margaret - one of the most eligible princesses in Europe - might marry one of the Portuguese princes.

However, this changed when the Connaughts left Portugal to travel to Sudan and Egypt, where they attended a birthday banquet in Cairo for

Margaret and Gustaf with four of their children

©wiki. Hughes & Mullins

Abbas II, Khedive of Egypt. It was here where Margaret happened to meet Gustaf, the grandson of King Oscar II of Sweden and second in line to the throne. Falling in love at first sight, Gustaf proposed to Margaret at a dinner at the British Consulate on 25 February. She accepted, much to the delight of her parents.

As the couple made their way back to Britain, they stopped by Rome with Margaret's parents, where they were invited to a dinner at the Quirinale Palace held by King Vittorio Emanuele III and Queen Elena. Three months later, Margaret and Gustaf married in St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle on 15 June. As a wedding present, the bride's parents gifted her with the Connaught tiara, which remains in the Swedish Royal Collection today.

After spending their honeymoon in County Limerick, Ireland, the newlyweds returned to Stockholm, Sweden, in July. Although Margaret and Gustaf were very happy together, the princess was not immediately welcomed by the Swedish court, which was far more rigid than the British court she had grown up in.

Nonetheless, Margaret's naturalness, charm and sense of humour quickly won over the common Swedish people. Choosing to use the Swedish version of her name, 'Margareta', she endeavoured to learn more about the history and social welfare of Sweden, taking lessons as well as quiet, incognito trips around her new country to learn more about it.

After two years of diligent study, Margaret became fluent in Swedish, and she grew more confident in her public engagements. In her spare time she enjoyed sports such as skiing, ice skating, tennis and golf, and she was known to take singing lessons. Using her passion for gardening, Margaret redesigned the gardens at Sofiero Palace, the summer residence which had been given to her as a wedding present. She wrote two books in Swedish about the gardens and illustrated them with her own drawings and photographs. These books were subsequently sold to raise funds for schools with childcare.

The grave of Crown Princess Margaret, King Gustaf VI and Queen Louise

©wiki. Jacob Truedson Demitz for Ristesson

Margaret and Gustaf had five children together: Prince Gustav Adolf, Sigvard Bernadotte, Ingrid, Queen of Denmark, Prince Bertil and Carl Johan Bernadotte. The princess insisted on being a hands-on mother rather than leaving her children to be raised by nursery staff, which was common among the aristocracy.

Gustaf liked the fact that Margaret wanted to have a close domestic life, as it was far more relaxed than the strict upbringing that he had received himself. Photographs of their family were sold to raise money for the princess' charities. In 1907, Gustaf and Margaret became the crown prince and princess of Sweden upon the death of his grandfather, with Gustaf's father becoming king as Gustaf V.

During World War I Sweden officially remained neutral, continuing to trade with both the Entente and Central Powers. Despite this the country was considered to be pro-German, a sentiment that was particularly strong among the Swedish nobles and political circles - partly because of a shared concern over Imperial Russia.

Consequently, exports of food to Sweden were greatly reduced, a situation which worsened after the United States entered the war in 1917. The subsequent food shortages led to public unrest, with a series of hunger marches and riots triggering the downfall of Sweden's conservative government.

As a British woman, Margaret's loyalties during the war were different to those around her at court, such as her mother-in-law, who was staunchly pro-German. However, she was careful not to show her feelings or support for her family back in Britain. Unfortunately this meant that Margaret was unable to visit her family for the duration of the war, even when her mother died following a bout of bronchitis and influenza in 1917.

THE COURTYARD CRISIS

POLITICAL TENSIONS IN SWEDEN WERE AT AN ALL-TIME HIGH BEFORE THE OUTBREAK OF WAR

As other countries engaged in an arms race in the lead up to World War I, the decision of liberal Prime Minister Karl Staaff to slow down Swedish armament and cut military spending was met with heavy backlash from the Swedish conservatives. In February 1914, a procession of 32,000 farmers from all over the country arrived in Stockholm to protest against the policies.

In an unprecedented show of support, King Gustaf V delivered a speech to the protestors who had arrived in the inner courtyard of the royal palace. In his 'Courtyard Speech', Gustaf advocated for higher military spending, and he openly disagreed with the actions of his government – the speech was subsequently reread by his sons, Crown Prince Gustaf and Prince Carl, to those who could not fit inside the courtyard.

The speech triggered a constitutional crisis, because as king, Gustaf was not meant to intervene in political matters of state, and so he was seen as overstepping his authority. Nonetheless, Gustaf's speech received widespread support, leading to Staaff and his liberal government resigning in protest, to be replaced by a conservative government. The event marked the last time that a Swedish monarch would intervene in political matters.

King Gustaf's speech triggered a constitutional crisis

© wiki. Hedin, Linderborg, Nilsson, Bilden av Sveriges historia (2005)

Putting her personal sacrifices aside, Margaret worked hard to ensure that she was always seen as loyal to Sweden. She founded a sewing society to support the Red Cross, providing Swedish soldiers with decent clothing and underwear, and she helped to organise supply drives, most notably a candle collection when paraffin supplies ran low. In 1917, Margaret even created a programme for girls to train and work on the land.

Her efforts also extended to helping with private letters and requests to trace missing men in prisoner-of-war camps throughout Europe. Not only did she send food parcels to support prisoners, but Margaret even sent them garden seeds to help supplement their diet. She also acted as a go-between with her relatives who had become divided by the war, and she corresponded with her father, who was Governor General of Canada for the first two years of the conflict.

Although Margaret went above and beyond for her adopted country, she sadly never got to be queen consort of Sweden. In January 1920 she underwent a mastoid operation to remove a piece of bone behind her ear, and she appeared to recover well. Yet just a couple of months later her health began to decline as she experienced facial neuralgia and contracted an infection, which quickly turned into sepsis. In the early hours of 1 May, Margaret died suddenly at the royal palace in Stockholm at the age of 38. Devastatingly, she was eight months pregnant with her sixth child.

Announcing her death to the country, Swedish Prime Minister Hjalmar Branting stated: "The ray of sunshine at Stockholm Palace has gone out." Margaret was buried in the city on 13 May, wearing her wedding dress and veil with a crucifix in her hands, as she had requested when she wrote her wishes in 1914. Her coffin was made out of English oak and covered with the British and Swedish flags, a final testament to her love for both countries.

The country grieved for their crown princess, and Gustav was left heartbroken by his beloved wife's death. Three years later he travelled to London and met Margaret's cousin, Lady Louise Mountbatten, and they married shortly afterwards, remaining together until Louise's death in 1965. He finally succeeded his father as king of Sweden in 1950, holding the position of crown prince for 43 years – a record that was beaten by Charles, Prince of Wales, in 2016.

Margaret's actions during the war were appreciated by the British government, and later by those in Swedish politics, who acknowledged her conduct for Sweden despite the separation from her family.

It is believed that her support for reform, unlike the conservative attitudes of her parents-in-law, influenced her husband and eased political tensions, helping to preserve the monarchy. To this day, Margaret is fondly remembered as Sweden's missing queen.

GRÖNSAKER
44
SPECERI
MATVARUAFFÄR
SKOMAKARE
VERKSTAD

People queuing for potatoes during food shortages in Stockholm, 1917

© wiki. Axel Malmström

THE HEIR WITHOUT A THRONE

Hailed as one of the Imperial German Army's finest commanders, Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria led his men superbly in a conflict that would ultimately rob him of his inheritance

WRITTEN BY CHARLES GINGER

Throughout the history of warfare, command has often been granted to those of royal lineage, regardless of whether the noble in question possessed any military experience or tactical acumen. The consequences of such a blinkered approach to leading armies in the field has resulted in disaster on more than one occasion, with King Edward II's crushing defeat at Bannockburn a prime example of the dangers of entrusting command to an ill-suited monarch. However, not every blue-blooded general has made the error of relying on their lofty status and sheer numbers as guarantees of glory. Some dedicated many years to studying the art of war, pouring over the tactics and manoeuvres of successful generals and absorbing the knowledge required to lead a body of men with cunning and consideration.

The Imperial German Army - which fought the Allies to a standstill during World War I and came within a whisker of victory on the Western Front in 1918 - was blessed with such a learned royal strategist in the form of Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria. Prior to the bloody reckoning of the Great War, Rupprecht, heir to the throne of Bavaria, pursued a military education befitting of a member of German royalty by joining the Königlich Bayerisches Infanterie-Leib-Regiment (Royal Bavarian Lifeguards Infantry Regiment), serving as a second lieutenant. A keen student, Rupprecht also spent two years studying at the universities of Munich and Berlin.

Following his stints at university and while serving in the 1st Heavy Cavalry Regiment, Rupprecht started attending lectures at the Bayerische Kriegsakademie (Bavarian War College). Spared from having to take any examinations on the grounds that he was to be groomed for command - as opposed to a life of soldiering - Rupprecht proved an able leader, with a string of promotions elevating him to rittmeister (captain) of a squadron in 1893, major general of the 7th Infantry Brigade in 1900 and general of the 1st Royal Bavarian Corps in 1906. His firm military grounding would serve him well eight years later when a European political crisis exploded into a full-blown global war.

At the outbreak of hostilities in August 1914 - a war whose origins are still hotly debated by historians, but one that was ultimately put in motion by Kaiser Wilhelm II's mobilisation order on 1 August - Rupprecht was placed in charge of the German Sixth Army, the headquarters of which he established inside the Hotel Bayerischer Hof in Munich. His task was one of monumental proportions: the organisation, equipment and

© Getty

The kaiser, with Prince Rupprecht standing to his left, bids a commander farewell near the front lines close to Cambrai, 1 December 1917

swift deployment of 220,000 troops. Each corps required 140 trains and 130 tonnes of food and fodder a day, meaning Rupprecht and his staff had to commandeer a total of 700 trains to move five corps and source 650 tonnes of food a day to feed the men and horses.

The Sixth Army comprised five army corps, four Bavarian and one Prussian, each one boasting 36,000 men split into two brigades. A cavalry division also needed to be transported, while older troops were charged with securing the vital lines of communication.

Having ordered the establishment of field headquarters in the German-held Lorraine, which lay on the border with France, Rupprecht – working alongside the chief of staff Konrad Krafft von Dellmensingen – spent the early days of August preparing to take control of the whole German left flank. Germany's main thrust was to be tied up in the execution of the Schlieffen Plan, a daring manoeuvre designed to enable the German right flank to dash through Belgium, which was expected to simply acquiesce to this unexpected violation of its sovereignty, into the north of France via a route that would avoid the formidable defensive structures arrayed along the Maginot Line.

As the right flank advanced, Rupprecht's force – which also encompassed the Seventh Army – was to occupy as many French troops as possible, diverting them from reinforcing the armies racing to counter the northern assault and thereby undermining France's efforts to resist the German advance. The decision makers within the upper echelons of the Imperial Army believed that such a two-pronged attack would knock France out of the war quickly and enable Germany to then turn east to face Russia.

The collision of two military powerhouses inevitably resulted in numerous savage engagements, with Germany benefiting from its initial momentum. One of the earliest major clashes was the Battle of Lorraine, one of a series of battles known as the Battle of the Frontiers, which raged from 14 to 25 August.

Knowing that France would be desperate to reclaim the region of Alsace-Lorraine, a land the French were forced to cede as a result of their crushing defeat in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 to 1871, the Germans anchored their ambitious manoeuvre around it, thereby drawing the French south towards the Swiss border and diverting troops away from the focus of the German attack. Centred around the Vosges in eastern France, the Battle of Lorraine began on 14 August when the French First Army sent two corps into the mountains. Joseph Joffre, commander-in-chief of the French forces on the Western Front, played into his enemy's hands by dividing the First and Second armies in the hope of pursuing and defeating a number of German contingents.

Aiming to seize Donon and Sarrebourg for France, Joffre pressed further into the Vosges, sucked in by the Germans' measured withdrawal. Emboldened by the seizure of Donon and with the left flank of the French thrust advancing between 10 and 12 kilometres, Joffre failed to comprehend the danger confronting his troops. He was quickly disabused of any notions of a rapid victory when the French 26th Division of the XIII Corps lunged for Cirey only to be beaten back ruthlessly by German machine guns and artillery well dug into the slopes. Such was the lopsided nature of the encounter that the Germans were able to hammer French artillery positions with impunity.

Prince Rupprecht inspects soldiers of the Sixth Army on the Western Front

Bloodied and bruised by the brutal battle, the French Second Army managed to regroup and gradually force the Germans back. However, the Germans were not retreating: Rupprecht was instead setting a trap. Just beyond the line of the French advance, the German Sixth and Seventh armies consolidated and stiffened in preparation for a counterattack, which was unleashed on 20 August. Rupprecht's plan worked, the badly mangled French armies driven back in utter disarray.

In attacking so aggressively Rupprecht had superseded orders simply to contain the French. Yet despite the mauling his men had given the enemy, Rupprecht ultimately failed to ensnare the French, who pulled back, regrouped and stopped the slow German advance at the Battle of the Marne in September.

In the wake of the early indecisive clashes, Rupprecht and the Sixth Army were moved north. Here Rupprecht would repeatedly attempt to outflank the Allies, his numerous battles with the British – who aimed their first chlorine gas attack at Rupprecht's men on 24 September 1915 – failing to provide a meaningful breakthrough. In turn Rupprecht frustrated a series of French assaults on strategic locations in Artois, including Vimy Ridge.

His promotion to field marshal in July 1916 saw Rupprecht take control of Army Group Rupprecht, which comprised the first, second, sixth and seventh armies. His new position placed him in charge of the German defensive effort at key battles including the Somme, Arras, Ypres and Cambrai. Yet Rupprecht's war – which he detailed in a 4,197-page diary – was not all defensive in nature after his initial advances in 1914.

By early 1918 Germany was in a desperate position on the Western Front, a situation that culminated in the planning of one final effort to force a breakthrough and alter the outcome of the war. Known as the Spring Offensive, the Imperial Army's last push, code-named Operation Michael, began on 21 March 1918, spearheaded by Rupprecht under the overall command of Erich Ludendorff, a commander whose crude assessment of their objectives – "We chop a hole. The rest follows." – exposed his insufficient understanding of the stormtroop tactics that would be crucial to any hope of victory.

Initially the German advance enjoyed success, with elite stormtroopers punching holes across the well-defended Allied lines. However, these soldiers soon became victims of their own success when they found themselves stranded too far forward from their supply lines. While the Allies lost approximately 255,000 men, these casualties could be replaced, as could the weaponry – around 1,300 pieces of artillery and 200 tanks – that the Germans either seized or put out of action, largely thanks to the US intervention into the war. As for the Germans, the loss of 239,000 troops was one that could not possibly be recovered. While it valiantly struggled on until 18 July, the Imperial Army's hopes of victory withered with time, its last effort to salvage something from the war ultimately achieving little.

According to his diary, Rupprecht foresaw Germany's defeat as early as 1 June 1918, five months before it actually became a reality. In September he reaffirmed his belief that the war was lost in a letter to his father, King Ludwig III of Bavaria, in which he warned that "peace must be made at any price. We are practically defenceless."

Able to air views that would have been branded defeatist had they come from virtually anyone else due to his royal status, Rupprecht was well placed to make his sobering assessment. He was also unfortunately positioned when it came to the Allied response to the Spring Offensive, which finally petered out on 18 July.

Launched on 8 August, what became known as the Hundred Days Offensive saw the Allies rapidly undoing all of the gains the Germans had made during their last push forwards. Cutting gigantic holes in the faltering enemy lines, the Allies quickly overwhelmed previously impregnable German defences in an onslaught that the Imperial Army had absolutely no answer to. Combined with domestic disturbances at home that eventually manifested in a revolution that deposed Kaiser Wilhelm II, the German reversals of late 1918 finally ended the war.

While Rupprecht found himself on the losing side in World War I, it is testament to his ability as a commander – and the incredible skills of general Hermann von Kuhl, the second chief of staff under which Rupprecht served and a man of rare brilliance – that the Imperial Army was able to fight for as long as it did on the Western Front.

Rupprecht's reward for his service to Germany was a period of turbulence that forced him to flee to Tyrol, a region now divided between Italy and Austria, for fear that anti-monarchists would target him as revolution swept across Germany. He would remain a prominent public figure, despite the downfall of Germany's royal dynasties, consistently advocating the restoration of the monarchy. In fact, he would hold on to this belief even throughout the tumultuous years of the next conflict to ravage Germany and the wider world.

King George V and Kaiser Wilhelm II were cousins, but family bonds couldn't stop World War I

THE WINDSORS AT WAR

George V did not relish the prospect of entering World War I, but circumstances forced Britain into it

WRITTEN BY JON WRIGHT

In May 1913, three cousins met at a family wedding in Berlin. It sounds like the most humdrum of events until we discover that the cousins in question were three of the most powerful men in Europe: the British King George V, Nicholas II, Tsar of Russia, and Emperor Wilhelm II of Germany, whose daughter, Victoria Louise, was the blushing bride. The prelude to the wedding was a cavalcade of banquets, balls and military displays, and on the big day, George V - purely as a matter of courtesy - wore a German military uniform. An undertow of tension could, however, be detected. There was mumbling about the problems in the Balkans, and Wilhelm could sometimes be spotted lurking in the corridors at Potsdam eavesdropping on private conversations between George and the tsar. In a little over a year the three monarchs would be fighting against each other in one of history's most devastating wars.

By early August 1914, a major, long-dreaded war was already underway, but Britain had not yet made a final decision about its role. This led to bizarre misunderstandings. The Polish king had informed Kaiser Wilhelm that on a recent visit to Buckingham Palace, George V had said: "We shall try all we can to keep out of this and shall remain neutral." According to his own written recollection, the king had used the more ambiguous phrase: "I hope we shall remain neutral." That little word 'hope' carried enormous significance, but it seems to have been lost somewhere en route to Berlin. The kaiser took the reported version as a cast-iron promise that Britain would not side against Germany and Austria-Hungary in their brewing conflict with Russia and France.

He was therefore furious when, on 4 August, Britain declared war. But the country did not have a choice. The German invasion of Belgium triggered Britain's commitment under the 1839 Treaty of London to guarantee Belgium's independence, though this was really just a pretext. The truly intolerable prospect was the fall of Belgium's neighbour to the south, as George V had mused back on 1 August: "I think it will be impossible to keep out as we cannot allow France to be smashed."

Unlike the tsar, or especially the kaiser, George was not in a position to devise strategies and bark out orders. That was, constitutionally, the job of his government. Not that this prevented George from seeking a more dynamic role, much to the annoyance of Whitehall. As just one example, George was eager to visit the troops at the Front, but he could not simply waltz into France and

© Alamy, Getty

A scene from the explosive battle of Jutland, at which George was present as an observer if not a particularly dynamic participant

say hello to British forces, ignoring all others. This would offend the French government, so a little diplomatic legerdemain, best left to the experts, was called for. George's trips would be officially billed as state visits, meetings with the French president would be arranged and the following of protocol resolved any potential problems.

Best of all, George's primary objective - encouraging his troops - could be achieved. The king was very good at that sort of thing: making endless visits to camps, hospitals, shipyards or munitions factories at home. But inspections of the front lines were particularly valuable. George had to squeeze in meetings with the top brass, but his obsession was spending time with the rank and file. He spurned detailed schedules and preferred, as one of his aides put it, to "motor out every day to see what is to be seen".

Unfortunately, trips to France could carry a cost. On a visit to troops at Hesdigneul in October 1915, George's horse was spooked by all the cheering and crashed down on top of the king. He emerged with a badly fractured pelvis that healed painfully and would blight the king's health for the rest of his life.

The king also had a wealth of information coming in from his old military pals, which greatly strengthened his position when he attempted to contribute to strategic discussions. This was, though, a two-way street, and his friends were not slow to complain about their logistical problems. Perhaps George could pull some strings. Having Douglas Haig, a close friend, as commander of British forces was an apparent godsend. But Haig was not slow to make use of the relationship when he found himself in hot water or in his campaigns to dislodge colleagues he did not respect.

All told, it must have been quite a frustrating situation for George. Pulled this way and that, aware of his considerable military knowledge and experience, but so often stymied. He didn't even have much of a say in one of the war's more curious consequences: changing the name of the royal dynasty.

"A MAJOR, LONG-DREADED WAR WAS ALREADY UNDERWAY, BUT BRITAIN HAD NOT YET MADE A FINAL DECISION ABOUT ITS ROLE"

“WHAT WAS THAT NAME AGAIN, SIR?”

IF YOU HAD A GERMAN-SOUNDING NAME IN WARTIME BRITAIN, IT WAS TEMPTING TO ADOPT AN ANGLICISED ALTERNATIVE. IF YOU WERE AT THE TOP OF THE SOCIAL PYRAMID, SUCH CHANGE WAS SIMPLY A MATTER OF TIME

Prince Louis of Battenberg had been forced to resign his position as First Sea Lord in 1914 because his German title did not quite ‘fit’ the image Britain wished to project. He had served Britain loyally for more than 40 years. In 1917 he was made to change his title to the considerably less glamorous 1st Marquess of Milford Haven, with the family name of Mountbatten.

The memory of this action infuriated his son, Dickie Mountbatten, though at the time his father managed to scribble a humorous note in a guestbook: “June 9th, arrived Prince Hyde; June 19th, departed Lord Jekyll.” The queen’s brothers, members of the Teck family, were also in for a surprise. Adolphus became the less German-sounding Marquess of Cambridge, and Alexander became Earl of Athlone.

Long-established German titles disappeared from British address books. Other figures, such as the sisters Princess Marie Louise and Princess Helena Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein, simply abandoned their German territorial titles and refused to have an alternative foisted upon them.

The phenomenon trickled down the social ladder, a trend identified by Horatio Bottomley and his bigoted weekly magazine *John Bull*. It urged Britons not to trust those who were “treacherously changing their names from Knopp to Knox, from Baumann to Beaumont”.

In 1914, Prince Louis of Battenberg was fprced to retire from the Navy due to anti-German sentiment

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George V muddying his boots during a visit to troops on the front line

George always stressed that he was a loyal Briton, and nothing got under his skin quite so much as being accused of a lack of patriotism. He could not, however, fathom the more spiteful acts of anti-German harassment: German churches being stoned, shops being looted or dachshunds being kicked as they waddled along the pavement. When his son Henry, studying at Eton, was invited to peer at German prisoners of war, the king thought this was in “very bad taste”. “How would you like it if you were a prisoner,” he asked Henry, who had people “come and stare at you as if you were a wild beast?” The whole royal family was heartbroken when Elsa, its German maid of ten years’ standing, was made to pack her bags and return home.

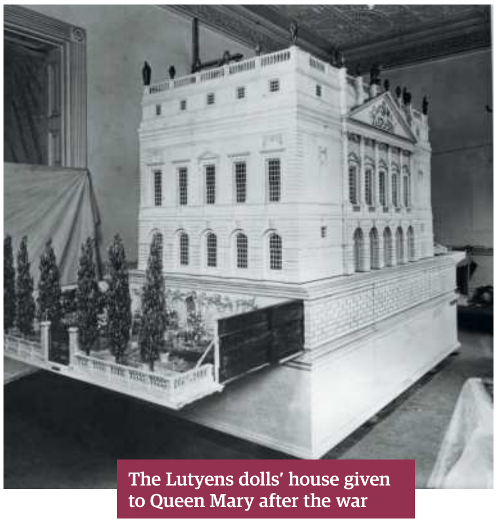
The intertwining of British and German royalty and aristocracy did, however, present difficulties. At the outbreak of war, the kaiser and other German princes were still titular heads of British regiments, and a quick glance at the scrolls of the Knights of the Garter revealed a fair few German names. In 1915, after the sinking of the RMS Lusitania, popular anger reached a fever pitch, and mobs assembled outside St George’s Chapel, Windsor, demanding the removal of the banners and stalls of the so-called enemy knights. This very popular wish was granted.

What, though, of the royal family’s own dynastic name? The unmistakably Germanic Saxe-Coburg and Gotha was less than ideal, and discussions in parliamentary committees resulted in the Titles Deprivation Act of 1917. British royals would now bear the name Windsor. It was a good choice, as English as could be imagined and redolent of the country’s past. It certainly outshone the other suggestions, which included the dusting off of Plantagenet and Fitzroy - even more bizarre, as it had often been used to denote illegitimate sons of the monarch.

Nor should we assume that the change sent George into paroxysms of regret. It actually chimed with efforts to modernise the monarchy and distinguish it from the overly extravagant European model. In a similar vein, George had no problem with the idea of British royals marrying British aristocrats rather than sticking exclusively to members of continental royal families. The entire affair did, however, provide the kaiser with a nifty one-liner: he looked forward to watching a performance of the Merry Wives of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha.

No one prized her status or relished the intricacies of protocol more than Queen Mary,

Queen Mary during one of her frequent hospital visits: on this occasion the Cambridgeshire Tuberculosis Colony at Papworth



The Lutyens dolls' house given to Queen Mary after the war

and while this characteristic endured, she also managed to become, in one historian's phrase, a "charitable bulldozer". Just a week after hostilities began, the *Daily Mirror* carried an unusual notice calling for "the women of Britain to assist in the making of garments for those who will suffer on account of the war."

Troops overseas and the impoverished unemployed at home would welcome flannel shirts, socks, sweaters, cardigan jackets and night attire produced by the thousands of volunteers who joined Queen Mary's Needlework Guild, though some thought the enterprise misguided. The influential Trade Union leader Mary Macarthur claimed that it was putting workers at clothing factories out of jobs. As Macarthur pleaded to one of her more well-heeled acquaintances: "Do everything in your power to stop these women knitting."

Macarthur was much keener on another of the queen's initiatives - the Work for Women Fund. This was a concerted attempt to raise the power and profile of women in the workplace, providing training and subsidies for promising businesses. It certainly contributed in the growth of the employed female population, which rose from 3.2 million in 1914 to 4.9 million in 1918. Again, the scheme had its critics. Sylvia Pankhurst, appalled by the pay rates on offer, referred to centres of the scheme as "Queen Mary's sweatshops".

Mary displayed seemingly boundless energy. Hardly a week went by without a photo of her visiting a hospital, and her concern for injured homecoming troops was patently sincere.

COUNTDOWN TO WAR

THE ASSEMBLING OF SIDES BEFORE THE WAR CAN BE CONFUSING. HERE IS A POTTED TIMELINE OF THE CRUCIAL LATER STAGES

28 JUNE 1914

The heir to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, is assassinated in Sarajevo.

23 JULY

Austria-Hungary issues an ultimatum to Serbia, believing that Serbians are behind the assassination. Serbia refuses to fully comply, and the two countries go to a war footing.

28 JULY

Russia, determined to support Serbia, partly mobilises its troops following the shelling of Belgrade, the Serbian capital, by Austria-Hungary. Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia.

Prince George fresh from his naval training

She began to hold tea receptions for them at Buckingham Palace - 2,000 guests were invited to three gatherings during a single week in March 1916. Like George, she popped over to France more than once: the sight of 1,500 men just in from Sens must have been distressing, but she simply strolled over and had a chat.

Perhaps most astonishing was her ability to follow self-imposed rules about frugality. There was no booze served at the palace, no theatre trips, and breakfast was always limited to two portions per person. A small gesture of solidarity, a little like growing mountains of potatoes on the royal estates, but Mary's popularity soared, and after the war, public subscriptions paid for a very handsome thank-you gift: a dolls' house designed by none other than Sir Edwin Lutyens.

The queen's children, meanwhile, played the decidedly mixed hands they had been dealt. Princess Mary was regularly by her mother's side during charitable functions and tours - notably those around London's bomb-scarred East End. Her greatest passion was nursing. She joined up as a probationer with the Voluntary Aid Detachments and completed her training at Great Ormond Street with flying colours. Mary would, however, always be most famous for the Christmas boxes that were sent to the Front in 1914. £100,000 was raised, and the boxes - silver for officers; brass for the rest - bore an image of the princess and contained goodies such as cigarettes, sweets, pencils and even spices.

The two boys who were old enough to fight both had exasperating wars. Lord Herbert Kitchener simply forbade Prince Edward, as heir to the throne, from getting too close to the action. Edward did make it to France, however, as a member of the Coldstream Guards - despite falling six inches short of the regiment's usual height requirement - and he did his bit, travelling around the troops to raise spirits. He did have one close shave when his driver was killed by shrapnel close to Vermelles in September 1915. He also managed to tag along on a few biplane flights, much to his father's distress, but he neatly captured his general sense of impotency while observing the slaughter at the Somme: "Sitting back here, doing so little" was vexing.

Edward's brother Prince Albert - who would become the future George VI - faced different obstacles. He spent 22 months at sea, many on board HMS Collingwood, but they were constantly interrupted by his gastric ailments. First there was appendicitis, then an undiagnosed ulcer that sent him to a hospital ship. The doctors strongly pressed for his medical discharge, but the king worried that this would just deepen Albert's depression: "In these circumstances, please say nothing to Prince Albert, and let us hope that he will continue to progress every day" was the official line.

Albert did manage to be present at one major engagement: the great battle of the fleets at Jutland in 1916. His involvement was limited to watching the scene unfold - and being mightily scared when enemy fire came rather close. He was still, the king wrote, "Very proud of being in action, but is sorry that his ship was not hit, as she has nothing to show that she has been in the fight." Albert made the most of it, of course, and talked like an old sea dog about the horrors of war. Ultimately the ulcer was diagnosed, and Albert was forced to take up a desk job at the Royal Naval Air Service's training camp at Cranwell - work he very much enjoyed - and made it back to France to witness the signing of the armistice in November 1918.

If you crave astonishing feats of bravery, the British royal family during World War I is not the obvious place to look. But it did achieve something remarkable: unlike so many monarchies across Europe, it emerged unscathed from the conflict. The example was set by King George. It was a little mean of Douglas Haig to pour scorn on his friend's inability to grasp the full terror of the Front: George, Haig wrote, hadn't seen men returning from Ypres with a "look of absolute terror in their faces such as I have never before seen on any human being's face". But that was a little like blaming an apricot for tasting like a peach. Kings did not see - and were not allowed to see - such terrors any more.

George still achieved, and suffered, a lot. He found a way through the squabbles, stoked by Herbert Henry Asquith and Lloyd George, that blighted domestic politics, and went through the devastating personal ordeal of offering and then denying a safe harbour to the deposed tsar in 1917. The problems - from fractious labour disputes and violence in Ireland to flu epidemics - just kept coming. George V is perhaps best characterised as one of those 'did his best' kind of kings. There were much worse varieties of monarch to have reigning over you, especially when Europe was falling apart.

30 JULY
Russia announces that it will fully mobilise its forces.

31 JULY
Germany and Austria also announce full mobilisation, and Germany demands that Russia back down.

1 AUGUST
When Russia does not agree to demobilise, Germany declares war against the tsar. Austria-Hungary follows suit on 6 August.

2 AUGUST
France fully mobilises its forces in sympathy with Russia.

3 AUGUST
Germany declares war against France.

FLIGHT OF THE ROMANOVS

As Russia turned on its imperial family, Europe came to the rescue of those lucky enough to survive the Bolsheviks

WRITTEN BY WILLOW WINSHAM

When Nicholas II was forced to abdicate in March 1917, there were few who could have foreseen where things would end for the Russian tsar and his immediate family. The tsar, his wife Alexandra, their four daughters, Olga, Tatiana, Maria and Anastasia and the young and ailing Alexei, the tsar's heir, suffered numerous humiliations and deprivations over the months to follow.

By the fateful day of 16 July 1918, the family had been under house arrest in Yekaterinburg for 78 days. At the mercy of their Bolshevik captors, their spirits were low as, despite rumours of rescue, the days continued to pass and help did not arrive. That night, the family were woken and instructed to dress, before making their way downstairs. No doubt confused as to what was occurring, they were joined by the doctor who oversaw the care of the ailing tsarevich, the tsar's valet, the family cook, and a parlourmaid, the latter carrying the family jewels sewn inside a pillow, and were told that they were to be moved for their own safety as the advancing Czech Army was nearing Yekaterinburg. Instead of being taken from the house, the family were escorted into a basement, where they waited at the pleasure of their captors.

It was not until the arrival of a contingent of armed men, headed by Yakov Yurovsky, the man in charge of the guards who watched the former imperial family, that their fate became clear; Yurovsky informed the tsar that he and the others were to be shot.

The murder of the Russian imperial family is perhaps one of the best-known and most intriguing tragedies of the 20th century. Amid the rampant debate and speculation that surrounds the story, one of the recurring questions is why the terrible events happened at all, and, crucially, why were Nicholas II and his family left to suffer their horrendous fate - a destiny that had been predicted years before by many?

One direction in which the finger of blame has been pointed is towards the British monarch, King George V. First cousin to the ill-fated tsar, his failure - or downright refusal - to help Nicholas and his family has often been met with great censure from historians and enthusiasts alike. It cannot, of course, be denied that George failed to

The surviving Romanovs under house arrest in the Crimea before their rescue

© Alamy, Shutterstock

save his cousin and his family, but to what extent should he be tarred with such a legacy? Politically, there was good reason for George to think twice before offering refuge to his despised cousin, despite the latter's perilous situation. Although the two were close and on good terms, the delicate political situation left the British king with a stark choice between family and his country and crown.

Indeed, in the wake of the Russian Revolution and the Great War, George was accused by some of being 'too German' due to his family connections: after all, the German kaiser was a first cousin of the British king, and the Russian tsar himself was a third cousin to Wilhelm II. Letting the fleeing Romanovs into the country was, it was feared, a sure-fire way to bring revolution and chaos to Britain that the country and the monarch could ill-afford. Speaking in favour of George V, Prince Michael of Kent defended the king by maintaining that it was the vehement opposition of the British people that kept George from acting, and that even then, moves were made to rescue his cousin, with several plans made and thwarted before they could come to anything.

It must also be remembered that hindsight is perfect but useless: George cannot have known for certain the terrible fate that awaited 'Nicky' and his family. Rather than solely blaming the British king, blame has often been placed at the door of the prime minister of the time, Lloyd George, with George V apologists insisting it was the minister who had the final say. This theory was discredited in the 1980s however, when sealed cabinet papers revealed that the prime minister had not been the one to sway the king's decision.

Another popular argument, especially within the British royal family, maintains that Queen Mary, George's wife, was the fly in the ointment and the reason for British refusal to give the Romanovs refuge. Derided as a heartless harridan and as having too much influence on the king, Mary has received bad press over the years for her supposed role in swaying her husband's mind. There has been no official proof of this however, and cabinet papers remain silent on the matter.

What of help from other quarters in Europe? Spain, Sweden and Norway, among others, all made moves to help the Romanovs, but such plans failed, evaporated or were turned down. It has been suggested that the tsar himself played a role in the ultimate fate of his family, and it seems that not only the tsar but also the wider Romanov family who remained in Russia, did not fully appreciate the danger that threatened them. Grand Duke Kirill, cousin to Nicholas II and the man who took his place as head of the family, was one of the few to take heed of the perilous situation in Russia: with permission granted by the provisional government he moved to Borga, Finland, in June 1917.

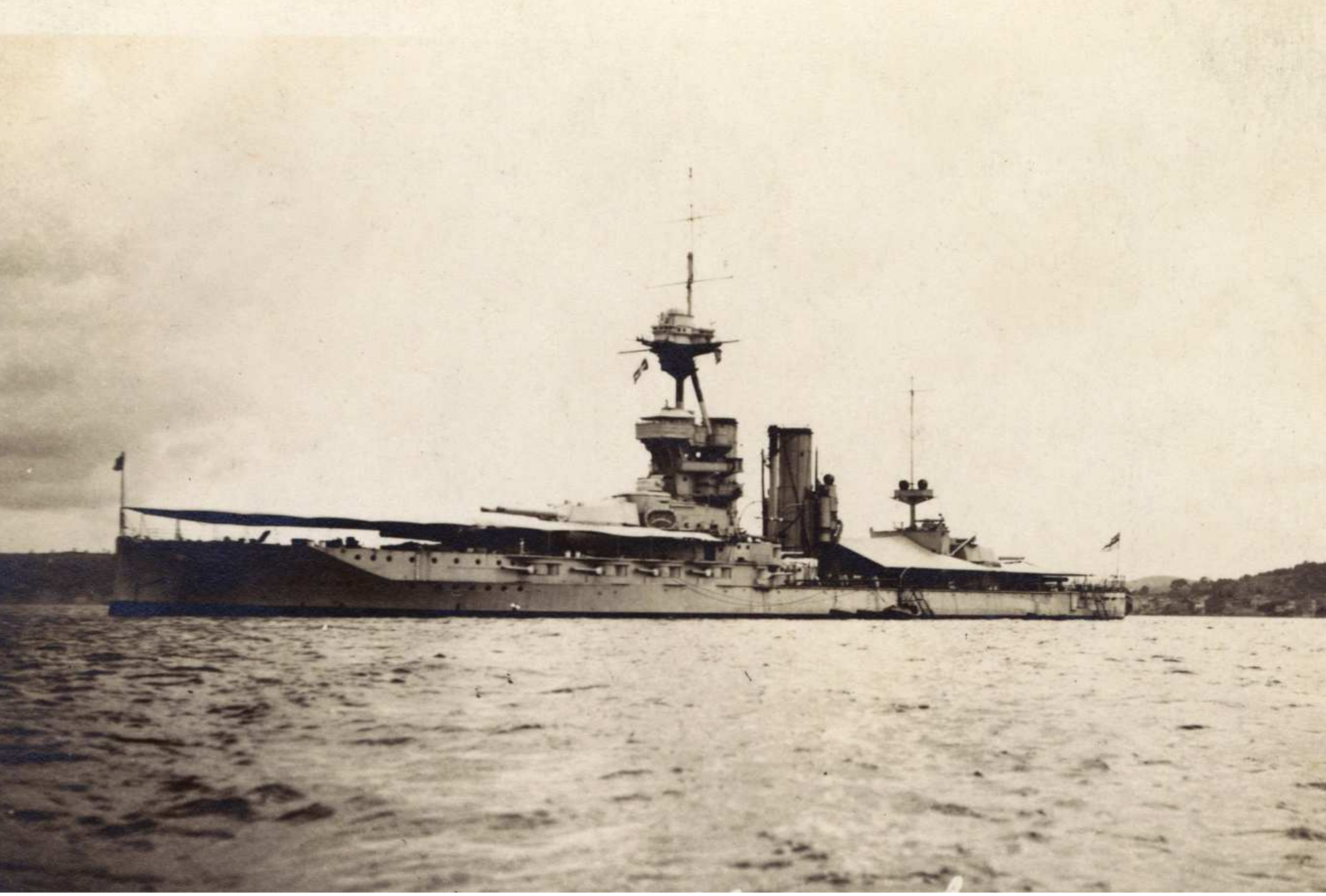
This, however, was the first and only move from the family: due to a variety of factors, no more Romanovs were to leave Russia until late 1918, a delay which had grievous consequences and cost the lives of many. Ultimately, it must also be remembered that the tsar and his family had been held under house arrest with the belief - shared by the family and other powers of Europe - that they were to stand trial. That the unthinkable could happen was not something that either side had realised until it was too late.

Unfortunately, the tsar and his family were not the only Romanov casualties during 1918. The tsar's younger brother, Grand Duke Michael, was murdered in Perm in June, just a month before the massacre of the tsar and his household at Yekaterinburg. To add to the tragedy, the tsarina's sister, Elisabeth, who had become a nun after the assassination of her husband, Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich, in 1905 was, along with one of the tsar's cousins and three princes of Romanov blood, buried alive in a mineshaft the night after the tsar was murdered. Tragically, the German kaiser, enemy to Britain and Russia, had offered refuge to Elisabeth on several occasions, but his help had been firmly rebuffed.

Although the death of the tsar was finally admitted, no official word was given regarding his wife and children, or the other murdered

Maria Feodorovna fled Russia and took up residence in England, before returning to her homeland of Denmark

> **“THE TSAR AND HIS FAMILY WERE NOT THE ONLY ROMANOV CASUALTIES DURING 1918”**



King George V with his cousin, Tsar Nicholas II

Romanovs. Rumours abounded, and it was nearly impossible for those who remained to know the truth of what happened. But it became clear that the time had come to leave Russia, and as the year progressed, the exodus began.

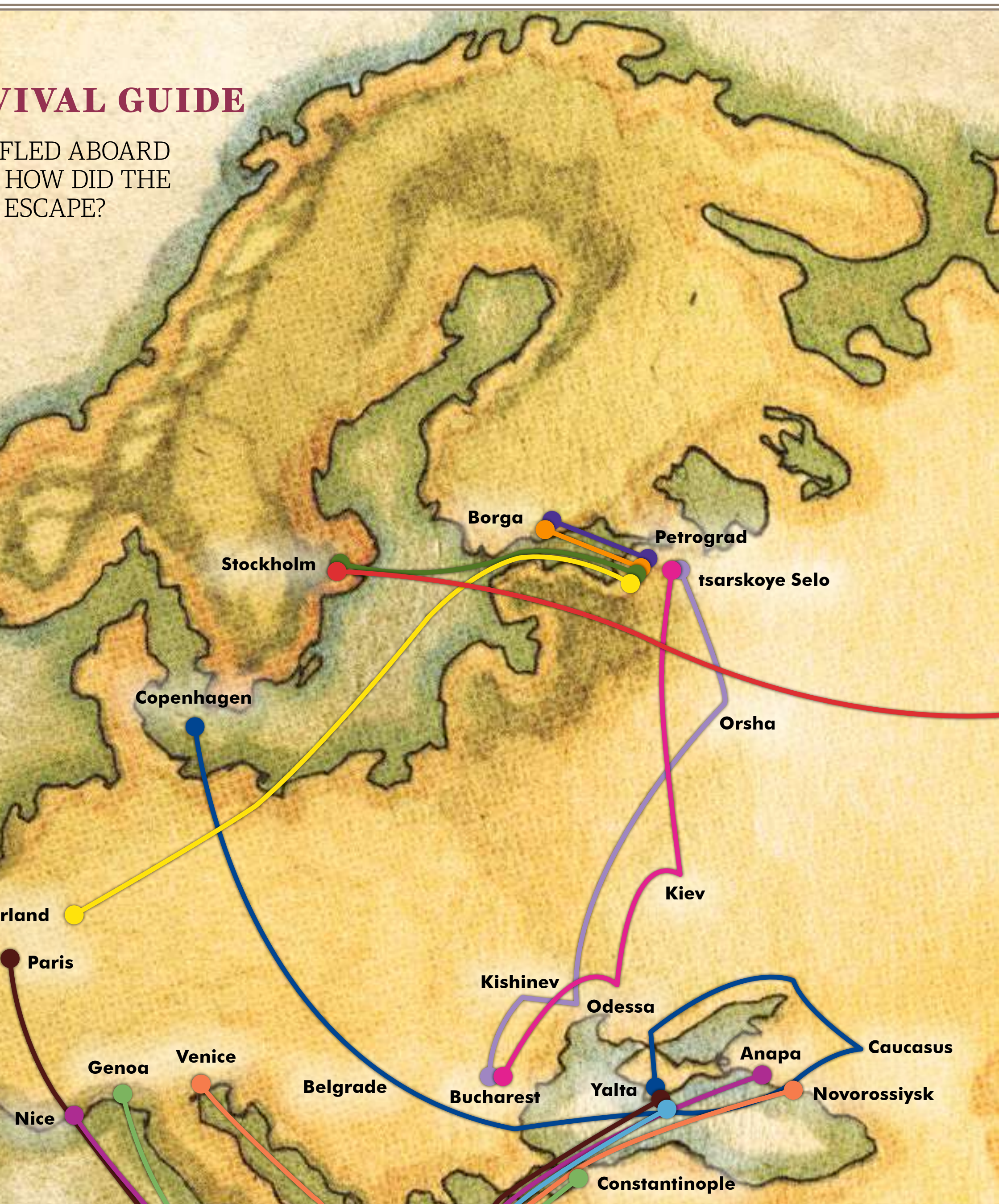
Grand Duchess Elizabeth, the wife of Grand Duke Konstantine and mother of the princes that had been buried alive, took refuge in Sweden in November 1918. Accompanying her were her two youngest children and two of her grandchildren. Prince Gabriel, the eldest son to survive of the Grand Duke Konstantine, was imprisoned but eventually released, finding refuge in Finland with the help of writer Maxim Gorki. Other members of the family were offered or sought refuge in Romania and Denmark, and this time help was more forthcoming. King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy and the kings of Montenegro and Sweden courted the Romanovs, with varying degrees of success. There were still those who were reluctant to leave however, and it was February 1920 by the time the last of the Romanovs left for good.

In spite of – or perhaps because of – the failure to rescue the tsar and his ill-fated family, Britain was at the forefront of the biggest rescue expedition launched to help the remaining Romanovs in Russia. The two largest and most prominent groups were those headed by the dowager empress, Maria Feodorovna – mother to the murdered tsar and Grand Duke Michael – and Grand Duke Nicholas, former commander-in-chief of the Russian Army and first cousin once removed of tsar Nicholas II. The two families had been residing in the Crimea since retreating there in 1917, where they were effectively held under house arrest, the dowager empress inhabiting the estate of Ai-Todor while the Grand Duke Nicholas resided at the nearby Dulber estate.

Now, in the wake of the Armistice being signed, the British government was growing increasingly worried, and a concerted effort was made to extract the dowager empress – sister to Queen Alexandra, wife of Edward VII – before she could suffer the same fate as her massacred sons. Maria Feodorovna however, was less than co-operative; an initial plan for a secret rescue had already been rejected. When her sister, Alexandra, wrote in December of 1918, adding her voice to those who were, with varying degrees of firmness, telling the dowager empress that she should leave, Maria merely thanked her kindly for her concern but informed her sister that she would be remaining in Russia for Christmas. Matters grew increasingly pressing, until George V himself intervened. The

THE ROMANOV SURVIVAL GUIDE

NOT ALL OF THE ROMANOVS FLED ABOARD THE HMS MARLBOROUGH, SO HOW DID THE REMAINING SURVIVORS ESCAPE?


Borga
Petrograd
Stockholm
tsarskoye Selo
Copenhagen
Orsha
Kiev
Switzerland
Paris
Kishinev
Odessa
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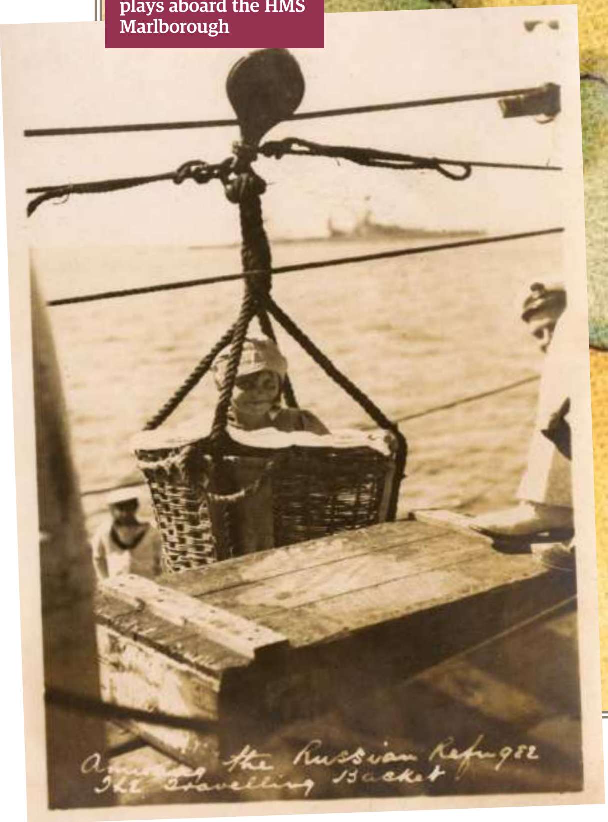
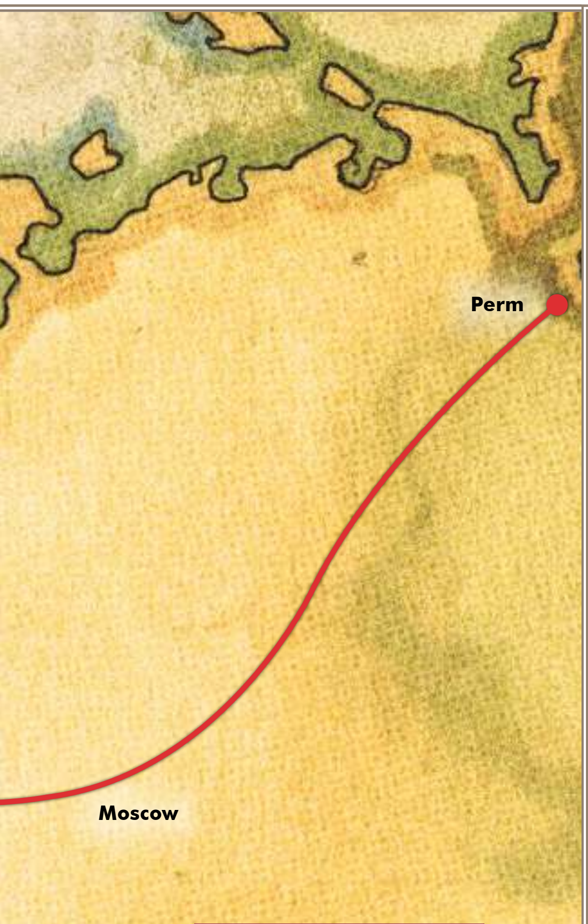
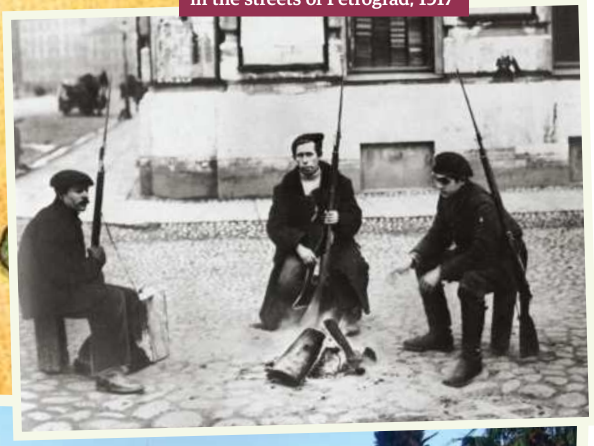
Genoa
Anapa
Belgrade
Bucharest
Yalta
Novorossiysk
Nice
Constantinople
Malta

A Russian refugee plays aboard the HMS Marlborough


Amusing the Russian Refugee
The Travelling Basket

The estate at Dulber, Crimea, where Grand Duke Nicholas resided before his rescue





A group of Red Guards resting in the streets of Petrograd, 1917

ROUTE 1

Petrograd-Borga

Survivors:

Grand Duke Kirill Vladimirovich
Grand Duchess Victoria Feodorovna
Princess Kira Kirillovna
Princess Marie Kirillovna

In June 1917, Grand Duke Kirill, his pregnant wife and their daughters fled Petrograd to Borga, Finland, after receiving permission from the Provisional Government.

ROUTE 2

Petrograd-Borga

Survivors:

Prince Gabriel Konstantinovich
Antonina Rafailovna Nesterovskaya

Having been imprisoned in Petrograd, Prince Gabriel's wife, Antonina, and writer Maxim Gorki fought to bring about Gabriel's release, which happened in 1918. The couple fled to Finland, later settling down in Paris.

ROUTE 3

Petrograd-Stockholm

Survivors:

Grand Duchess Elizabeth Mavrikievna
Prince Georgy Konstantinovich
Princess Vera Konstantinovich
Prince Vsevolod Ivanovich
Princess Catherine Ivanovna

With permission from the government, the group accepted Queen Victoria of Sweden's invitation and set sail aboard the Angermanland in November 1918.

ROUTE 4

Tsarskoye Selo-Orsha-Odessa-Kishinev-Bucharest

Survivors:

Grand Duchess Maria Pavlovna the Younger
Prince Sergei Mikhailovich Puliatin

The couple fled Petrograd in July 1918, aiming to reach the south of Russia, which was held by German forces. After receiving an invite from Queen Marie of Romania, the pair sought refuge in Bucharest. To prove her royal identity, Marie stashed her papers in a bar of soap, ensuring the pair were quickly taken to safety.

ROUTE 5

Perm-Moscow-Stockholm

Survivors:

Princess Elena Petrovna

Having been captured and taken prisoner, Helen was sent to prison in Perm. With the insistence of Norwegian diplomats, she was moved to Moscow and later fled Russia to Sweden.

ROUTE 6

Petrograd-Switzerland

Survivors:

Grand Duchess Olga Konstantinovna

The Dowager Queen of Greece had returned to her homeland, where she set up a military hospital when WWI broke out. When she tried to leave Russia, she was retained. It was only when the Danish government intervened that she was permitted to leave. She went to Switzerland to join her son, Constantine I of Greece.

ROUTE 7

Tsarskoye Selo-Kiev-Odessa-Bucharest

Survivors:

Princess Tatiana Konstantinovna
Prince Teymuraz Constantinovich Bagration
Princess Natalia Constantinovna Bagration

Tatiana and her children had lived with her uncle, but upon his arrest she fled south through Kiev and Odessa, finally reaching Romania in 1919.

ROUTE 8

Yalta-Paris

Survivors:

Grand Duke Alexander Mikhailovich
Prince Andrei Alexandrovich
Elisabetta Ruffo Di Saint Antimo

Under the pretence of representing the Romanov family at the Paris Peace Conference, Grand Duke Alexander fled with his eldest son and daughter-in-law aboard the HMS Forsythe in December 1918.

ROUTE 9

Anapa-Constantinople-Nice

Survivors:

Grand Duke Boris Vladimirovich
Zina Sergeivna Raschevskaya

Boris escaped Russia via Anapa with his mistress (later his wife). The pair eventually settled in France.

ROUTE 10

Yalta-Constantinople-Malta

Survivors:

Dowager Empress Maria Feodorovna
Grand Duchess Xenia Alexandrovna
Princess Irina Alexandrovna Yusupova
Prince Felix Yusupov
Prince Felix Felixovich
Princess Zinaida Nikolaevna
Princess Irina Felixovna Yusupova
Prince Feodor Alexandrovich
Prince Nikita Alexandrovich
Prince Dmitri Alexandrovich
Prince Rostislav Alexandrovich
Prince Vasili Alexandrovich

ROUTE 11

Constantinople-Genoa

Survivors:

Grand Duke Nicholas Nikolaevich
Grand Duchess Anastasia Nikolaevna (of Montenegro)
Prince Sergei Georgievich
Princess Helen Georgievna of Leuchtenberg
Count Stefan Tyszkiewicz
Grand Duke Peter Nikolaevich
Grand Duchess Militza Nikolaevna
Prince Roman Petrovich
Princess Marina Petrovna
Princess Nadejda Petrovna Orlova
Prince Nicholas Vladimirovich Orlov
Princess Irina Nikolaevna Orlova

ROUTE 12

Yalta-Caucasus-Novorossiysk-Belgrade-Copenhagen

Survivors:

Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna
Nicholas Alexandrovich Kulikovsky
Tikhon Nikolaevich
Guri Nikolaevich

Initially travelling the same route to Yalta as her mother, Dowager Empress Maria Feodorovna, Olga was determined to stay in Russia and travelled along the coast to Novorossiysk. In early 1920 the family fled to Serbia, and later on to Copenhagen.

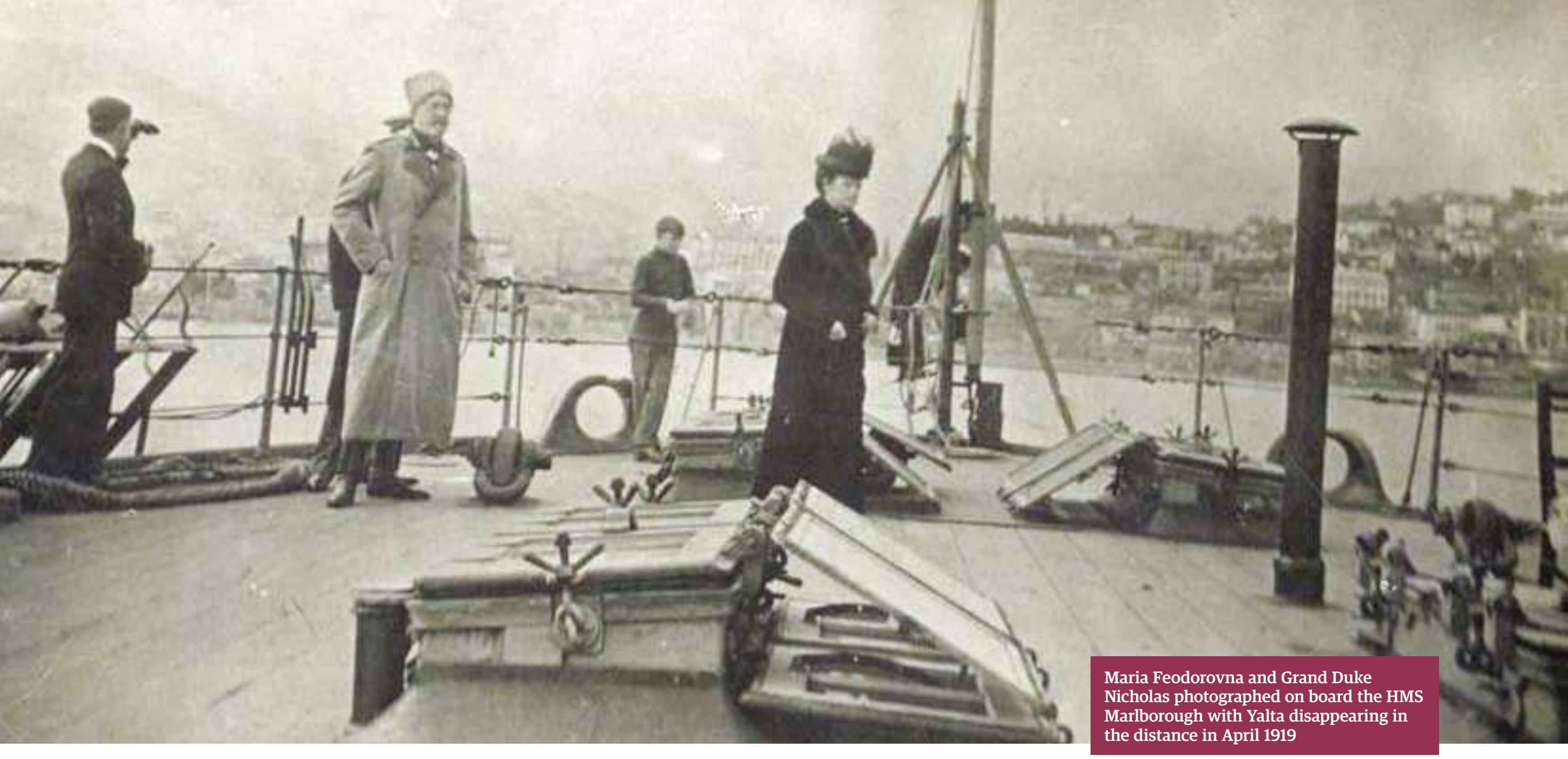
ROUTE 13

Novorossiysk-Venice

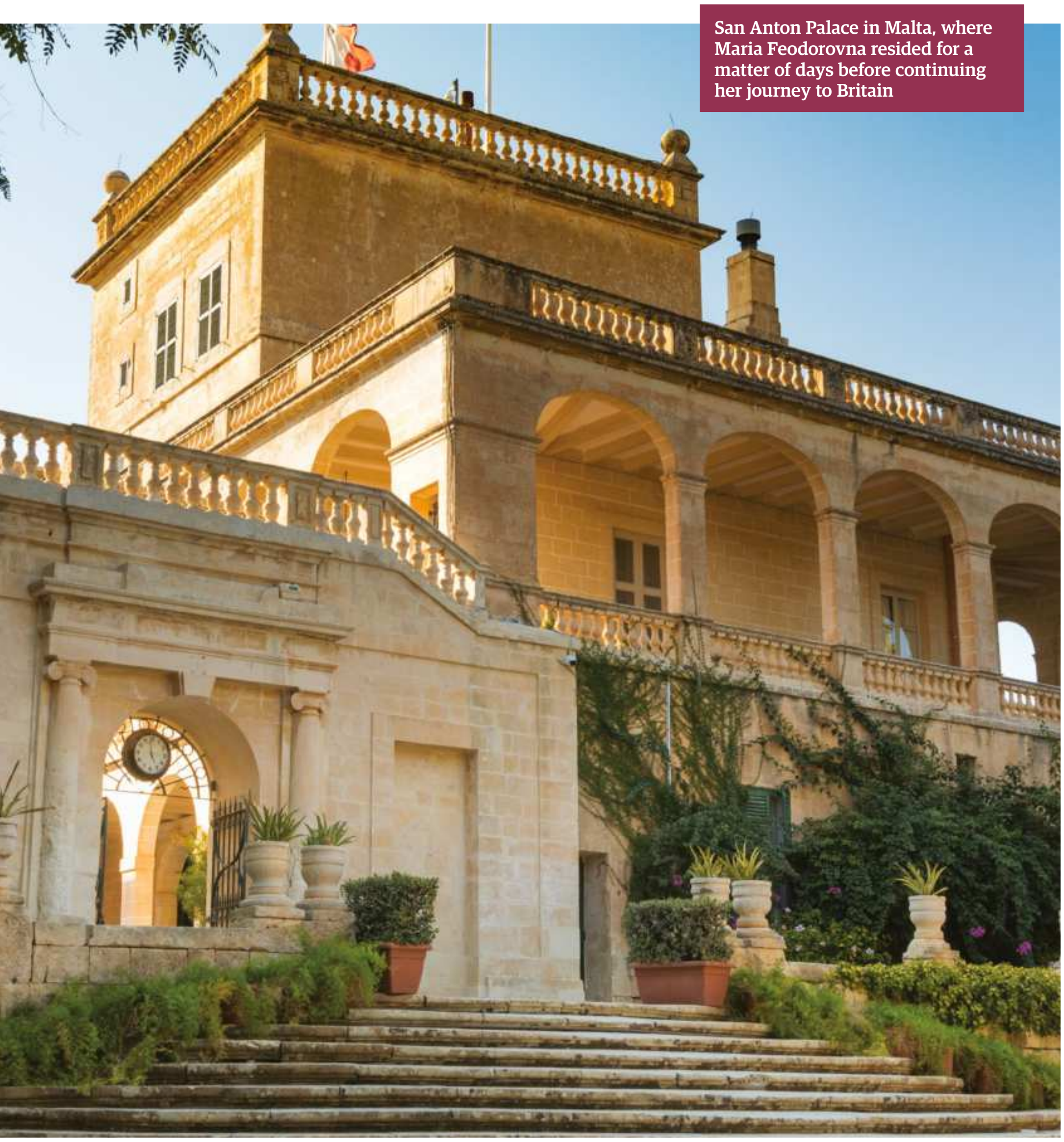
Survivors:

Grand Duchess Maria Pavlovna the Elder
Grand Duke Andrei Vladimirovich
Mathilda-Marie Feliksovna Kschessinskaya
Prince Vladimir Andreivich Krassinsky

The last of the Romanovs to flee Russia, Maria, her son, his mistress and their child fled on the Semiranisa, an Italian liner that took them to Italy.



Maria Feodorovna and Grand Duke Nicholas photographed on board the HMS Marlborough with Yalta disappearing in the distance in April 1919



San Anton Palace in Malta, where Maria Feodorovna resided for a matter of days before continuing her journey to Britain

Romanov parties from Ai-Todor and Dulber would be evacuated by the British Navy along with other refugees and taken to safety, and plans were drawn up for the operation to be carried out quickly. Even then it was April 1919 before the dowager empress accepted the inevitable, finally agreeing to leave only after she was assured that her own ship would be the last to leave Russia.

The HMS Marlborough was to remove the remaining Romanovs from the Crimea - a war ship that might be considered ill-designed for the carrying of such esteemed passengers. Within any family tensions exist, and the Romanovs were no exception. This fact was exacerbated by the heightened political situation in Russia and the circumstances they had lived through. Maria Feodorovna and Grand Duke Nicholas, despite being neighbours in their Crimean estates, were decidedly at odds with one another, and this ongoing feud was to echo bitterly through the entire voyage.

The 7 April 1919, the day designated for the families to embark, did not get off to a good start; Maria Feodorovna was late to arrive, causing worry and annoyance among family and crew alike. Once the Romanovs were aboard, it was apparent that the captain of the HMS Marlborough had been ill-informed, as there were many more people than they had expected, not to mention the family dogs. There was a vast quantity of unlabelled luggage that had to be reunited with each owner, a feat finally achieved by first lieutenant Pridham with the help of the Grand Duchess Marina, the only one aboard who could speak Russian and English. There were some striking personages on board the Marlborough that day. Grand Duke Nicholas had arrived in full military uniform, proud and resplendent. Four generations of Romanovs were on board, a poignant representation of what remained of the once-great family. Not only that, among the passengers was Prince Felix Yusupov, the murderer of Rasputin.

It was an emotional day: the sons of Grand Duchess Xenia had each taken a bag of soil from the Ai Todor estate from the area that held most meaning. And with some hasty adjustments (and grumbling from the dowager empress at the taking of the best sleeping spots by Grand Duke Nicholas and his party), the exiles were settled into what was to be their home for the journey.

More refugees making up the remnants of the Russian aristocracy and 200 tonnes of luggage were taken on board British ships at Yalta over the next few days. As promised, the HMS Marlborough was the last to depart, setting sail on 11 April. It was not a moment too soon; Yalta became a bloodbath shortly after, those who remained there at the mercy of both Red and White Armies as the town descended into chaos.

The Romanov refugees were mostly stoical about their situation. The dowager empress ensconced herself on deck and received company there on a daily basis, while the princes experimented with magic tricks and the children roamed the ship and amused and exasperated the crew. Despite their differences, one thing all the fleeing Romanovs held in common was a great interest in eating, which was hardly surprising after the months of deprivation they'd experienced; meat had been an infrequent luxury, and the memory of coffee made from roasted acorns one that would not be quick to fade.

Despite memorial services being held for the tsar and Grand Duke Michael at Ai-Todor, the dowager empress flatly refused to entertain the notion that her sons were dead by the time she embarked the HMS Marlborough. She clung to the belief that he was still alive throughout the voyage. Indeed, it was five years after her voyage on the HMS Marlborough that the death of Grand Duke Michael was proven without a doubt, while the remains of the tsar and his family had still not yet been discovered before her death in 1928, at the age of 80 in Denmark.

One thing that is striking from the accounts is the fondness with which the officers and crew of the HMS Marlborough came to hold their unlikely passengers. In return, it seems that the Romanovs likewise held the ship's officers with high regard. As an expression of this, Maria Feodorovna, Grand Duke Nicholas and their families were keen not to cause further trouble for their hosts, going out of their way to be polite, courteous, and grateful for every small task or kindness. The friendships made during the voyage did not dissolve when the families left either; many kept in touch, and Pridham not only named his third child Marie after the dowager whom he held in such esteem, but asked that Maria Feodorovna be the child's godmother. Something else that was remarked upon was how the Romanovs treated the servants that had accompanied them into exile; rather than the haughty, imperious tyrants portrayed across the British press, the exiles were at pains to make sure their retainers had every comfort that could be given to them.

Throughout the voyage, the eventual destination for the fleeing families was uncertain. Malta was mooted as an option, and official, albeit secret, preparations were made in that direction, with telegrams exchanged and instructions given for the governor's house to be readied for the use of the dowager empress herself. There were mixed messages, however, as another telegram to the Admiralty intimated that the dowager and her family were to be taken to England, while the Grand Duke Nicholas and his party were destined for Constantinople before journeying onwards. It was this latter scenario that was to prove correct, and the two parties finally went their separate ways, with the Grand Duke and his relations transferring to the HMS Nelson, which would take them on to Genoa, Italy. Grand Duke Nicholas and his party left the Marlborough on 16 April and the ship set sail the day after, taking them on their way and leaving the dowager empress and her party to continue on alone, effectively ending their voyage feud.

Easter - a time of great importance to the Romanovs - was spent on board the Marlborough, with gifts swapped between exiles and crew. Gifts were also exchanged on 20 April, their final night on board, and the next day Maria Feodorovna and her party transferred to HMS Nelson to continue to England. This was not to be the dowager's final residence however, and her time in England with the royal family was to prove short-lived. Come August 1919 she was ready to move on, tensions between her and her sister along with a dissatisfaction at her decline in status prompting a move to Denmark, her country of birth. After an equally tumultuous time with her nephew, King Christian, she finally retired to Hvidøre, where she remained until her death several years later.

The remains of the tsar and his family were discovered in 1991 and laid to rest in St Petersburg; the remains of Alexei and the remaining daughter were finally discovered in 2007. The Russian Church Abroad canonised the murdered Romanovs in 1981, but it was not until 2000 that the Russian Orthodox Church did the same. Nearly a century after the terrible slaughter of the tsar and his family and the escape of the remaining Romanovs, the question of whether the appalling events of 1918 could have been averted and who could or should have done so, is still not easily answered. But it is hoped that the much maligned and venerated family has finally found peace.

Empress Maria Feodorovna's bedroom and study at Hvidøre, her residence in Denmark

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FROM BLITZ TO VICTORY

GEORGE VI'S LAST STAND

As Hitler's forces devastated Europe, Britain's king became a figurehead for the fight against fascism

WRITTEN BY DENIS JUDD

George VI was an exceptionally committed and active Head of State during the perils and crises of the Second World War, ultimately playing a crucial role in leading the nation and the British Empire and Commonwealth to final victory over the Axis powers of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan. When he became King-Emperor after the traumatic abdication of his brother Edward VIII in 1936, however, there were some within the establishment who feared the new king might not be up to the job, even in peacetime. More sensibly, the prime minister, Stanley Baldwin, realised that "there is a lot of prejudice against him. He's had no chance to capture the popular imagination as his brother did. I'm afraid he won't find it easy going for the first year or two."

Despite George VI's deep personal misgivings as he ascended the throne, the media, especially in Britain, was quick to come to the rescue. It presented a cosy, reassuring image of the new royal family: a monogamous and loving couple at its head, with their two adored, demure and wholesome daughters, pictured together in the garden, or perhaps sitting round a roaring sitting room fire while reading, chatting, stroking a dog and doing what millions of others might well be doing in countless semi-detached houses or country cottages. The temptation to identify with what appeared - at first sight, anyway - to be merely another comfortable, happy and unpretentious suburban nuclear family was irresistible. The image was to be reinforced many times over as the king and his family faced the everyday dangers and disruptions that the British people experienced during World War II.

Although he had fewer than three years upon the throne before the war, King George himself was to rise to the exceptional challenges of a wartime kingship with considerable success. Among his best qualities was his capacity to adapt to his dramatically changed circumstances after 1936 and to absorb what was required of him as monarch. No great scholar or bookworm in his early life, George VI proved a very quick learner

© Alamy, Getty, TopFoto

George VI with his family and mixture of dogs at the Royal Lodge, Windsor

EXPRESS
SPECIAL LATE NEWS
BRITAIN DECLARES WAR
A newspaper seller holds a poster stating that war has been declared

indeed after his accession to the throne. He also understood the limitations of his role and influence as a constitutional monarch.

Still suffering, despite the vast improvements achieved through his work with the speech therapist Lionel Logue from a sometimes hesitant delivery of public speeches, he could not aspire to rhetorical flights and vivid verbal imagery while addressing and swaying huge audiences. What he could deliver, however, were plain, completely sincere addresses - many broadcast by BBC Radio - which enabled him to connect with his mass audiences at home and throughout the British Commonwealth and Empire in ways eschewed by more flowery orators.

Nor did he waste his time demanding that he got his own way over wartime policy, or in obstructing, either overtly or covertly, developments of which he disapproved. This was not his function or his duty, and, in any case, between 1940 and 1945 he had a prime minister in Winston Churchill who was not just fully in charge of momentous policies and strategies, but with whom he forged an exceptionally close and creative relationship as well.

Perhaps surprisingly, George VI had keenly regretted the resignation of his first wartime prime minister, Neville Chamberlain. When Chamberlain, amid the ruins of his pre-war policy of appeasing Hitler, eventually resigned in May 1940 as France was crashing to unexpected, catastrophic defeat, the king was deeply concerned, writing: “It is most unfair on Chamberlain to be treated like this after all his good work”. This heartfelt lament partly reflected the fact that the king had strongly supported Chamberlain’s high-risk policy of appeasement, and partly illustrates how much he relied upon good working relations with his prime ministers and became anxious at the prospect of forging new ones.

Somewhat reluctantly, the king invited Churchill to succeed Chamberlain, recognising that “there was only one person that I could send for to form a government, who had the confidence of the country, and that was Winston”. Accordingly, Churchill set about creating his wartime coalition government, in which leading Conservative, Labour and Liberal statesmen played vital parts, with the opposition leader Clement Attlee serving as deputy prime minister.

Why did George VI express misgivings over appointing Churchill? One reason is that he saw his new premier as something of a political maverick; too mercurial and unreliable to be able to trust completely. A man, indeed, who showed little hesitation in changing his fundamental political loyalties, or in defying party policy, as with the progress of Indian independence during the 1930s, or more critically over appeasement. Churchill had also been a strong supporter of Edward VIII during the Abdication Crisis. The two men were also very

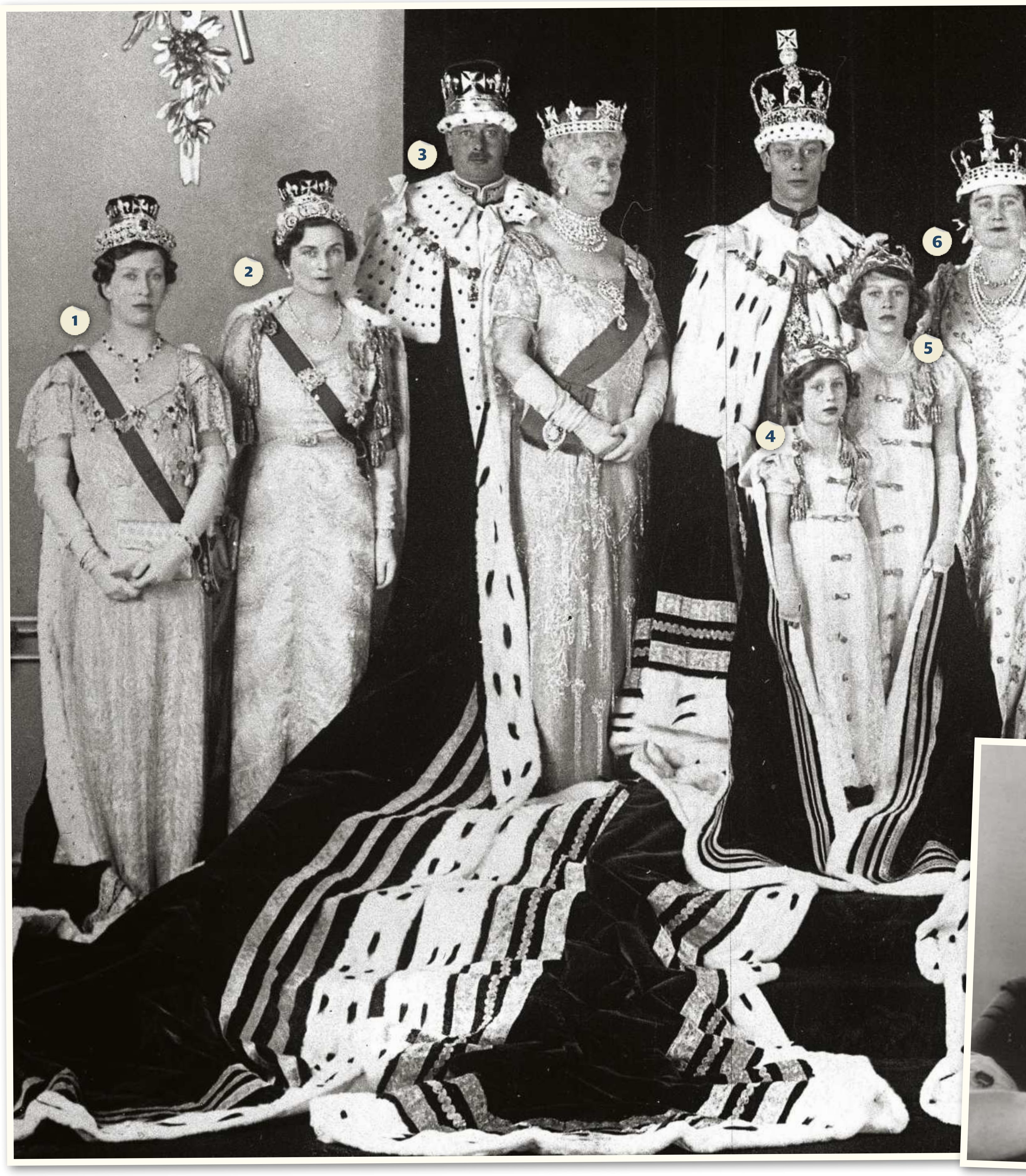
George VI and Queen Elizabeth entertain First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt on the presidential couple's trip to London, 1942

On the first evening of war in 1939, George VI issued a radio broadcast to the nation

different in their personalities, since King George VI was essentially shy, modest and a chronic worrier, whereas Winston Churchill was ebullient, forceful and apparently sure of his own superior abilities, and, despite his personal struggles with bouts of depression, a leader who exuded complete self-confidence.

In fact, George VI provided the perfect foil to his expansive, eloquent and larger-than-life wartime prime minister. Soon the king was "regarding the prime minister's audiences with pleasurable anticipation. He had fruitful opportunities for a common unburdening of mind, and by September [1940] the formal audiences had been replaced by regular Tuesday luncheons, at which the king and his prime minister, serving themselves from a side-table, would transact State business, undisturbed save by an occasional air-raid."

In February 1941 the king wrote in his diary, "I could not have a better prime minister". Their different styles might best be illustrated by an incident in 1942, as the crucial battle of El Alamein was underway in North Africa and Churchill was dining at Buckingham Palace. Conscious of the momentous struggle underway between the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THE WINDSORS AT WAR

GEORGE'S WARTIME SERVICE IS CELEBRATED TO THIS DAY, BUT HOW DID HIS FAMILY PLAY THEIR PART?

1. Mary, Princess Royal
b.1897-d.1965
Princess Mary, the king's only sister, became Chief Controller and later Commandant of the Auxiliary Territorial Serve (the ATS, to be renamed the Women's Royal Army Corps after the war). She visited units of the ATS as well as various wartime canteens and welfare organisations.

2. Alice, Duchess of Gloucester
b.1901-d.2004
Alice worked with both the Red Cross as well as the Order of St John. She was the Queen's Deputy as Commandant-in-Chief of the Nursing Corps. When war began, she was appointed Head of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (the WAAF), becoming its Director and Air Chief Commandant in 1943.

3. Henry, Duke of Gloucester
b.1900-d.1974
The king's younger brother, Prince Henry had pursued a career in the British Army and was made a Major General in 1937. When the war began, he was appointed Chief Liaison Officer to the British Expeditionary Force sent to France. A proposal made in the House of Commons in 1942 that he be made Commander-in Chief of the Army was quickly squashed.

4. Princess Margaret
b.1930-d.2002
Though too young to join the ATS, Princess Margaret often appeared in various morale-boosting press photographs, like tending the allotment she shared with her sister and learning how to operate a stirrup pump in order to put out fires caused by bombing. She appeared often in family photographs.

5. Princess Elizabeth
b.1926-d.2022
The late British monarch made a very popular wartime BBC Radio broadcast in 1940 on 'Children's Hour', and was often pictured in the press. In 1945 she became a Second Lieutenant in the ATS where she learned how to drive and service army trucks, becoming especially knowledgeable on the subject of sparking plugs.

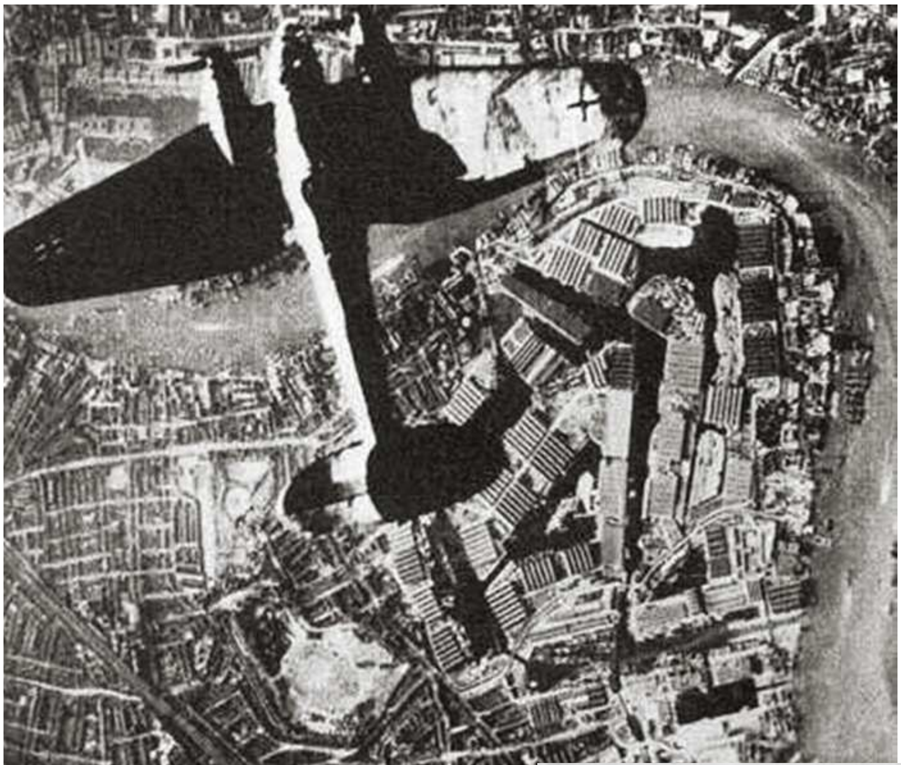
6. Queen Elizabeth
b.1900-d.2002
The king's consort's main role during the war was to support her husband in his many wartime activities, especially visiting bombed areas and generally showing that the monarchy was as involved as ordinary people in the struggle for victory. Her sunny personality was a powerful factor in maintaining high national morale.

7. George, Duke of Kent
b.1902-d.1942
The king's youngest surviving brother, Prince George was appointed an Air Vice Marshal in the Royal Air Force when the war broke out. George was an effective public speaker, and even went to the United States in 1941 where, for example, he personally addressed aircraft workers in Baltimore, Maryland. Tragically, in 1942 he was killed on a tour of duty when the plane carrying him crashed in the Scottish Highlands.

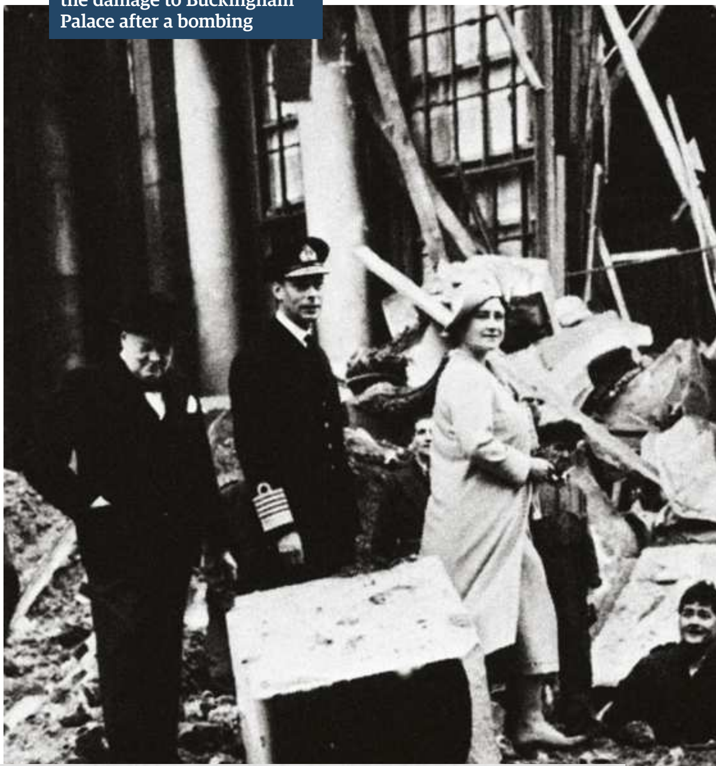
8. Marina, Duchess of Kent
b.1906-d.1968
Widowed in 1942, the duchess continued to play an active role in promoting the Red Cross and the First Aid Service. One photograph from 1943 shows her joining a forces sing-song at the United Nations Forces' Club in London.

9. Wallis, Duchess of Windsor
b.1896-d.1986
Thought to have been far too sympathetic towards the Nazi regime before World War II began, Wallis, Duchess of Windsor loyally played her part by helping her husband carry out his official royal duties abroad in the Bahamas.

10. Edward, Duke of Windsor
b.1894-d.1972
Despite his ill-judged visit to Nazi Germany in 1937, where he was photographed with the duchess being warmly welcomed by a beaming Adolf Hitler, the former king wished to serve his country once war broke out. After spending a largely unprofitable time in Madrid, Spain, he was eventually made Governor-General of the British colony of the Bahamas in 1940, where he served until 1945.



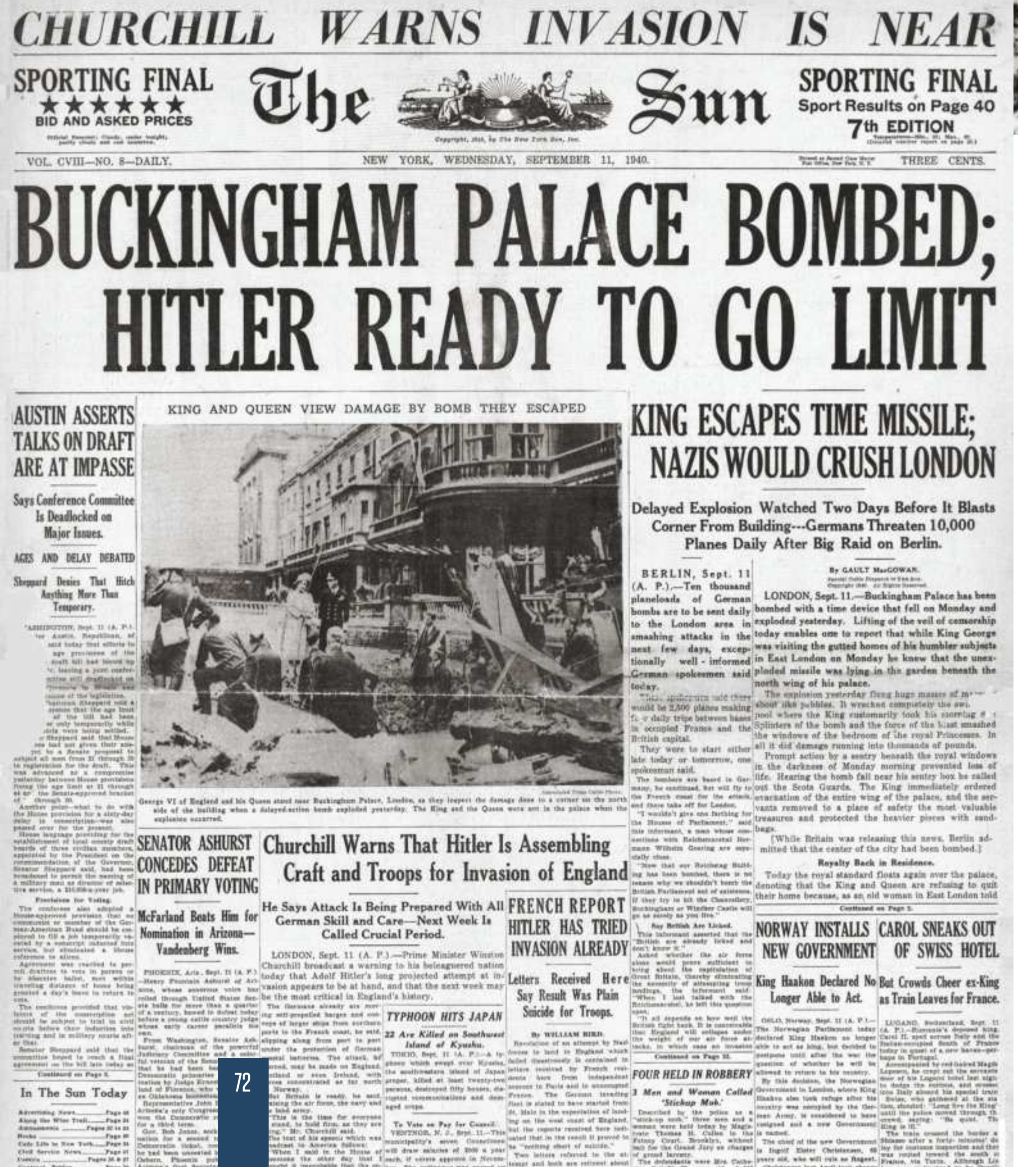
A German bomber flies over the iconic curve of the Thames in London during a raid in 1940



George and Elizabeth inspect the damage to Buckingham Palace after a bombing

Eighth Army and allied troops and Rommel's Afrika Corps, the prime minister fidgeted and showed signs of tension, finally excusing himself and leaving the room to telephone 10 Downing Street for news. He returned in a joyful mood, loudly and enthusiastically singing 'Roll Out The Barrel'.

As the people of Britain and the Empire-Commonwealth, following France's surrender, braced themselves for the ordeal of 'standing alone', it seemed far better to be led jointly by a prime minister who exuded self-belief and who could conjure up support from past triumphs of national history, and by a monarch who refused to move out of London in daytime during the Blitz and who, in the interests of national economy, took the time earnestly to paint lines low inside all the baths in Buckingham Palace to show how deep to make the hot water. The king's generally simple tastes and his disinclination towards luxury fitted admirably with the wartime privations of his subjects. Food rationing was strictly enforced at the royal palaces. Once, offering a visitor a sandwich for lunch, the king remarked, "I don't know what's in these. Sawdust I expect". He drank draught beer from preference,



CHURCHILL WARNS INVASION IS NEAR

SPORTING FINAL
★★★★★★
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The Sun

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SPORTING FINAL
Sport Results on Page 40
7th EDITION

VOL. CVIII—NO. 8—DAILY. NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1940. THREE CENTS.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE BOMBED; HITLER READY TO GO LIMIT

AUSTIN ASSERTS TALKS ON DRAFT ARE AT IMPASSE

Says Conference Committee Is Deadlocked on Major Issues.

AGES AND DELAY DEBATED

Sheppard Denies That Hitch Anything More Than Temporary.

KING AND QUEEN VIEW DAMAGE BY BOMB THEY ESCAPED

George VI of England and his Queen stand near Buckingham Palace, London, as they inspect the damage done to a corner on the north side of the building when a delayed-action bomb exploded yesterday. The King and the Queen were not in the palace when the explosion occurred.

KING ESCAPES TIME MISSILE; NAZIS WOULD CRUSH LONDON

Delayed Explosion Watched Two Days Before It Blasts Corner From Building---Germans Threaten 10,000 Planes Daily After Big Raid on Berlin.

BERLIN, Sept. 11 (A. P.).—Ten thousand planeloads of German bombs are to be sent daily to the London area in smashing attacks in the next few days, exceptionally well-informed German spokesmen said today.

They were to start either late today or tomorrow, one spokesman said.

By GAULT MacGOWAN.

LONDON, Sept. 11.—Buckingham Palace has been bombed with a time device that fell on Monday and exploded yesterday. Lifting of the veil of censorship today enables one to report that while King George was visiting the gutted homes of his humbler subjects in East London on Monday he knew that the unexploded missile was lying in the garden beneath the north wing of his palace.

Splinters of the bomb and the force of the blast smashed the windows of the bedroom of the royal Princesses. In all it did damage running into thousands of pounds.

Prompt action by a sentry beneath the royal windows in the darkness of Monday morning prevented loss of life. Hearing the bomb fall near his sentry box he called out the Scots Guards. The King immediately ordered evacuation of the entire wing of the palace, and the servants removed to a place of safety the most valuable treasures and protected the heavier pieces with sandbags.

[While Britain was releasing this news, Berlin admitted that the center of the city had been bombed.]

Royalty Back in Residence.

Today the royal standard floats again over the palace, denoting that the King and Queen are refusing to quit their home because, as an old woman in East London told

SENATOR ASHURST CONCEDES DEFEAT IN PRIMARY VOTING

McFarland Beats Him for Nomination in Arizona—Vandenberg Wins.

Churchill Warns That Hitler Is Assembling Craft and Troops for Invasion of England

He Says Attack Is Being Prepared With All German Skill and Care—Next Week Is Called Crucial Period.

LONDON, Sept. 11 (A. P.).—Prime Minister Winston Churchill broadcast a warning to his beleaguered nation today that Adolf Hitler's long projected attempt at invasion appears to be at hand, and that the next week may be the most critical in England's history.

FRENCH REPORT HITLER HAS TRIED INVASION ALREADY

Letters Received Here Say Result Was Plain Suicide for Troops.

By WILLIAM BIRD.

TYPHOON HITS JAPAN

22 Are Killed on Southwest Island of Kyushu.

FOUR HELD IN ROBBERY

3 Men and Woman Called 'Stickup Mob.'

NORWAY INSTALLS NEW GOVERNMENT

King Haakon Declared No Longer Able to Act.

CAROL SNEAKS OUT OF SWISS HOTEL

But Crowds Cheer ex-King as Train Leaves for France.

In The Sun Today

The view looking south down Walbrook, London, after an air raid on 10-11 May 1941

although he did once produce a rare bottle of French wine when meeting with Churchill, while refusing – to his premier's annoyance – to say how he came by it.

The king's determination not to be seen as living in conditions unaffected by the privations of war arose not merely from a desire to share in some measure the lifestyle of the majority of his subjects, but from a sense of what was proper and decent. Foreign visitors were sometimes taken aback by royal living conditions. When Eleanor Roosevelt, the wife of President Franklin D Roosevelt, stayed at a battle-scarred and shabby Buckingham Palace in the autumn of 1942, she wrote with some surprise in her diary, "I do not see how they keep the dampness out. The rooms were very cold except for the smaller sitting-room with an open fire. In every room there was a little electric heater." Mrs Roosevelt also noted that both the king and queen were suffering from colds and that the food included dehydrated, reconstituted eggs, various pies and jams made from root vegetables. Despite this basic and – for Mrs Roosevelt – surprising wartime fare, the food was served, in telling contrast, on silver and gold plates.

The media also made sure that the British people, amid the stresses and anxieties of World War II, did not forget that, as a midshipman in the Royal Navy, George VI had served on HMS Collingwood during the 1916 Battle of Jutland, the greatest and most far-reaching naval encounter of World War I. In keeping with this tradition of royal involvement in the war effort, Princess Elizabeth joined the ATS – the Women's Army – towards the end of the war, becoming a driver of army trucks and knowledgeable on the subject of sparking plugs. There was also a certain symmetry in the bombing of Buckingham Palace at the same time as terraced houses in Stepney, Coventry and Plymouth were being pulverised.

In fact, the royal family's decision not to seek long-term and safe refuge out of London was typical of their determination to share their subjects' wartime ordeals, especially the relentless Luftwaffe bombing of London, other major British cities and national infrastructure. Although the two princesses slept at Windsor Castle for much of the war, the king and often the queen were determined to stay in London.

Twice, German bombs hit Buckingham Place during 1940. On the second occasion, two bombs landed in a quadrangle a mere 30 yards from where the king and queen were sitting talking to a member of palace staff. The king wrote in his diary afterwards, "We looked at each other & then we were out into the passage as fast as we could get there. The whole thing happened in a matter of seconds. We all wondered why we weren't dead." Queen Elizabeth's response to the attack was straightforward and honest: "I'm glad we've been bombed. It makes me feel we can look the East End in the face."

During the war, the royal couple made many visits to bombed towns and cities, to munitions factories and military installations, appearing before the public as often and as informally as they could. For example, on the day after the first bombs hit Buckingham Palace in September 1940, the king visited the already battered East End of London, where it was reported that he said, "It is wonderful – really wonderful – how brave everyone has been". Mrs Margaret Price was busy scrubbing her floor clear of falling debris that had dropped 90 yards from her house when the king walked by. "Lor," she said. "If it's not the king – and me so untidy." She jumped up and waved to him excitedly. The king smiled back. His Majesty had

THE KING'S ROYAL VISIT OF 1943

IN THE MIDST OF THE WAR, GEORGE VI MADE VISITS TO BOTH MALTA AND NORTH AFRICA

Although the king had visited the BEF in France shortly after the outbreak of hostilities, his trip to North Africa in 1943, not long after the Battle of El Alamein had decisively turned the tide of war in that region against Rommel's Afrika Corps, was very different – a rare occasion for celebration. Mixing freely with units of the Eighth Army (known colloquially as the Desert Rats) and other Allied forces, the king was enthusiastically received, often pausing to hear the troops' accounts of their personal experiences.

Among the Allied leaders he met in North Africa were generals Alexander and Montgomery, and the leaders of the Free French Forces, generals De Gaulle and Giraud. Commonwealth forces made up an important part of the Eighth Army, chiefly units from India and South Africa. Despite the scorching desert heat and a punishing schedule of nearly 3,000 miles, he also managed to visit the heroic colony of Malta whose wartime resistance had earned it the award of the George Cross for valour. A photograph of the royal visit to Malta shows packed and wildly celebrating crowds lining the battle-scarred streets of the capital Valetta, as the king drives past in a black Austin car. Despite the long and hard road that lay ahead, it was at last possible to believe, especially with the United States and Soviet Russia as crucial parts of the Grand Alliance, that final victory was now all but certain.

King George VI with General Montgomery

to climb over a heap of debris to inspect some wrecked houses. "Nice work, mate!" a workman called out to him. A woman broke through the crowds in one street to grasp the king's hand and say, "God bless and save you, Sir, and the queen and the princesses". George, obviously touched, shook the woman's hand and thanked her. In April 1941 the *Daily Mirror* carried a photograph of the king and queen smiling amid a crowd of East Enders who were smiling joyfully back at them, with the caption, "Look at this photograph – the king, the queen, the cop, the kids, the crowd – and not a gloomy face among them."

Quite apart from such morale-boosting activities, George VI worked exceptionally hard in other ways during the war, making many visits to various units of the armed services, both at home and – when the conflict allowed – overseas. He insisted, whenever possible, on decorating all ranks of the fighting forces with the medals they had won in combat. He also tirelessly visited factories, workshops, coal mines, the docks and all the places where the war was being waged through the efforts of the civilian working population – a growing proportion of them women. He paid great attention to detail and was able frequently to astonish managers and workers alike with his knowledge of technical details. On one occasion, learning that there was a serious shortage of parts for anti-tank guns, he had a lathe installed at Windsor Castle and

IT'S V-E DAY!
East German Units Yield
Remember Pearl Harbor!
EXTRA
Crowds celebrate the announcement of VE Day

A street party in London celebrating VE Day

As crowds gather outside Buckingham Palace on VE Day, George VI, his family and Winston Churchill step out onto the balcony to wave

often worked on it at weekends. He also devised a new medal, the George Cross, to be awarded to civilians who had demonstrated gallantry in the war effort.

Wartime brought with it a veritable mass of government-imposed regulations affecting everyday life. As the historian A J P Taylor noted, "The king loved working to rule. The war brought many rules to which he could work." During the blackout he made a point of stepping outside whichever palace he happened to be in to check that no light was escaping from the windows – no small task with so many windows to observe. Although he always appeared in public wearing military uniform, in private he tended to make do with his pre-war stock of clothes, of which there were admittedly a good many. Nonetheless, when his shirts' collars and cuffs wore out, he asked his tailor to make new ones from the shirt-tails.

He also took the possibility of a German attempt to kidnap him seriously, and regularly took revolver practice in the grounds of Buckingham Palace. When being driven in his official car he always had a sten gun at his side and it was understood that he would shoot it out with any enemy assailant. The king also made it clear that, in the event of a German invasion, he would prefer to die fighting on his home ground.

King George also made a profound impact on the wider stage of the war. He proved a real asset to the British government in welcoming and making fruitful contact with the civilian and military leaders of the various nations and factions that were eventually to comprise the Grand Alliance that defeated the Axis powers. Throughout he demonstrated patient and often surprisingly well-informed diplomatic skills. His constitutional position as King-Emperor also made him a vital and inspirational figurehead of a complex and multi-ethnic global empire.

As someone who had seen active service during World War I, the king was especially keen to visit British and Commonwealth forces in the various theatres of war. Such trips, for obvious reasons, could not be made during the heat of battle, but one of the most significant royal visits occurred in 1943 when George VI visited victorious Allied forces in North Africa, prudently making a new will before he departed. Since it also included a visit to Malta, which had recently been awarded the George Cross for its wartime heroics, the king travelled some 6,700 miles in all, enduring scorching heat and digestive upsets in the process. Typical of his reception by thousands of troops was an account of him "surrounded by hundreds of men, talking to them, asking them about their experiences. Then the men broke into song with 'For He's a Jolly Good Fellow'."

As the D-Day landings of summer 1944 approached, George VI found himself in a battle of wills with Churchill over the prime minister's determination to accompany the Allied invasion forces over the Channel. The king's wish also to be present was a complicating factor. In the end, George VI had to threaten personally to drive to the place of embarkation and thus prevent Churchill setting sail for Normandy.

For the last few months of World War II, the king had to get used to a new prime minister following Labour's landslide election victory in July 1945. As in 1940, George VI mourned the loss of a trusted colleague, writing, "It was great shock to me to have to lose Churchill". As before, however, the king was soon appreciating the personal qualities of his incoming premier – the modest, precise and shrewd Clement Attlee – despite some early awkward silences between the two essentially shy men.

Attlee greatly valued the king, saying with words that sum up his wartime contribution to final victory: "The longer I served him, the greater was my respect and admiration… It was his fate to reign in times of great tension. He could never look round and see a clear sky… He was a very hard worker. Few people realised how much time and care he gave to public affairs, and visitors from overseas were often astonished at his close familiarity with all kinds of questions. With this close study went a good judgement, and a sure instinct for what was really vital."

FROM PALACES TO PRISON CAMPS

Under the rule of Nazi Germany, no acts of rebellion – royal or otherwise – were exempt from persecution

WRITTEN BY GRACE FREEMAN

By the time that World War II had broken out in 1939, Prince Rupprecht and Princess Antonia – the last Crown Prince and Princess of Bavaria, née Princess of Luxembourg – had already spent much of the previous 20 years making their brazen opposition to the Nazi regime known.

Rupprecht had laid claim to the Bavarian throne upon his father's death in 1921; although he was never to become king, due to the republication of Bavaria back into the German state following the end of World War I, he did assume immediate governance of the House of Wittelsbach.

Staunchly resistant to the rising rule of the Weimar Republic, Rupprecht spoke out against the military's use of particular weapons – including aerial bombing and poison gas – as well as making a public statement to advocate the German nation's involvement in all future peace conferences following the armistice of the previous war.

During the infamous coup of 1923, known as the Beer Hall Putsch, Hitler attempted to seize power in Munich, Bavaria's capital, and it was reported that he had promised to restore the lost monarchy as part of his governmental rule. Rupprecht, who had not been consulted prior to this public declaration, refused to support the rebellion and it collapsed. A decade later, in 1933, the Nazi Party would subsequently dismiss any dedicated monarchist groups, with some organisations forced into the Hitler Youth and others dissolved entirely.

Unconvinced by the beliefs of the far-right movement throughout the course of the 1930s, the Wittelsbach family could not be persuaded to join Adolf Hitler, despite his attempts to sway the Bavarian dynasty. Rupprecht is said to have

30 years her senior, Rupprecht married his second wife, Antonia, in 1921

© Alamy

confessed to King George V over a private lunch that he found the German leader to be "insane". Hitler, in turn, is said to have admitted to a disliking of the prince.

Rupprecht's disinclination towards the dictator was such that the Wittelsbachs stopped visiting their much-loved summer home of Schloss Berchtesgaden, a castle close to the Austrian border, as Hitler also had one situated nearby.

Instead, they journeyed to Schloss Hohenschwangau in the Bavarian Alps. This was the childhood home of 'Mad' King Ludwig II, who had built the nearby famed and fairy-tale-like Schloss Neuschwanstein and who was succeeded by Rupprecht's grandfather following his mysterious death.

At the start of 1933, and with the increasing power of the Third Reich, Bavarian Minister-President Heinrich Held proposed to announce Rupprecht as their general state commissioner - both as a beacon of strength and order to its concerned people and as a clear act of defiance to Hitler, the then newly elected chancellor of Germany. Held wavered in his decision, however, and the declaration was never made.

Two months later, Nazi supporter Franz Ritter von Epp was elected as the state-holder of the Bavarian municipal. It was a position similar to that which Held had anticipated for Rupprecht but under Reich rule, rather than that of the state government. The first motion of von Epp's was to dismiss the entire elected government of Bavaria.

This was loudly opposed by the Wittelsbachs, with Rupprecht writing letters of plea and protest to President Paul von Hindenburg and the exiled Wilhelm II, the last German Emperor, who had abdicated his throne and fled Germany following the nation's defeat in World War I, all of which went unanswered.

Withdrawing themselves and the rest of their family from the public eye, Rupprecht and Antonia refused to show any kind of support or acquiescence to the orders of the Weimar Republic. They decided to send the children to England to continue their education. Henry, the eldest and the singular boy of the six, would thereby avoid being forced to join the Hitler Youth, and his five sisters would evade the female division of the youth organisation, the League of German Girls.

With continued resistance to the actions of the Nazi Party, the Wittelsbachs were ultimately cast into exile at the outbreak of war in 1939. Rupprecht's childhood home and Munich's largest royal palace, the Residenz, had been taken over by

The Gestapo took over the Wittelsbachs' royal palace in Munich as their local headquarters

©wiki NTB

the Nazi's secret police force, the Gestapo, as their local headquarters, and other Bavarian castles had also been confiscated.

Fleeing to Italy (Antonia and the children had to wait for their passports and followed Rupprecht a few weeks later in the February of 1940) and arriving in Rome, the family were banned from returning to Germany. Following a stay in the capital, they moved out towards Florence and into a villa in the hills which was owned by generous family friends.

Rupprecht continued to uphold his belief in the possibility of restoring the true Bavarian monarchy, which had collapsed after 738 years of rule following the demise of his father. In a 1943 public memorandum, as the war raged on, he declared his belief in Germany's eventual defeat and his hopes of pardoning as many of the nation's people as possible when the Nazis were finally crushed.

In 1940, Henry turned 18 and was required by German law to report for military duty. Upon reporting to the embassy, he was informed he would not be permitted to return to Germany, and nor was Rupprecht upon his appeal for re-entry. The Wittelsbachs now prepared for a more permanent stay in Italy: Rupprecht settled into a palazzo to the south of Florence's River Arno while Antonia moved with their daughters into a boarding house a few streets away.

By 1944, the Nazi Party and the Italian Fascists were collectively ruling all of central and northern Italy, and Rupprecht wanted the family to move back towards Rome to be close to the sanctuary of the Vatican. Antonia refused, citing the climate being poor for her health, and insisted on returning to the northern mountains.

By the time that Germany came to occupy Hungary later in the year, the prince, princess, and their six offspring were still in exile. Rupprecht, who had remained in Italy, was able to evade capture. Knowing that the Gestapo would eventually come for him, he had secretly transferred lodgings in Florence and, after hiding for almost two months inside, presented himself to the British Army upon their arrival into the city in August. Henry, too, had secreted himself in Rome and travelled to reunite with his father following the Allied occupation.

Antonia and the five sisters were not so fortunate. In July 1944, an attempt had been made to assassinate Hitler, and thousands suspected of opposing the regime were subsequently arrested or executed. Antonia and the three youngest girls were detained and interrogated about the whereabouts of Rupprecht. Luckily, they knew little and were unable to help.

Editha, a fourth sibling, was also arrested and joined her mother and siblings. During their journey back to Germany Antonia had fallen ill with typhus fever and was incubated for some time at a hospital in Innsbruck, near the Austrian border, while the daughters were taken ahead.

Following their capture, they were confined to Sachsenhausen concentration camp in the northeastern state of Brandenburg. Registered under the pseudonym surname 'Buchholz', they were placed in a small house as notable prisoners and kept there for a little under six months. Albrecht, Rupprecht's eldest son from his first marriage, had been imprisoned with his wife and children, and they occupied the neighbouring house.

In January 1945, Irmingard, the remaining fifth sister, joined her siblings. She had been arrested at Lake Garda by the Gestapo and, like her mother, treated for typhus fever at Innsbruck. They had

RUPPRECHT'S FIRST WAR

THE CROWN PRINCE OF BAVARIA PLAYED HIS PART ON THE WESTERN FRONT

©wiki Bain News Service, publisher

Rupprecht's firm opposition to the policies of the Third Reich was likely founded on his experiences in World War I, a tragedy that no right-thinking commander of men would ever have wanted to relive.

Prior to the war he had trained in the Bavarian Army and studied at the Munich War Academy, reaching the rank of major general by the age of 31. When Great Britain declared war on Germany in 1914 he immediately signed up to fight.

He was promptly sent to Lorraine, in northeast France, to command the German Sixth Army of around 250,000 soldiers, many of whom also hailed from Bavaria. Along with his men, Rupprecht was assigned the task of trapping the French in the border region, which he failed to achieve.

From the end of 1914 through to mid-1916 he maintained German defences at Notre Dame de Lorette and Vimy Ridge, close to the Belgian border. Promoted to field marshal in August 1916 and appointed head of four armies, he oversaw the German resistance at key battles including the Somme and at Passchendaele, resigning on 11 November 1918, the day of the Armistice.

“ALL OF THE WITTELSBACH CHILDREN WERE EVENTUALLY RELEASED, ALONG WITH THOUSANDS OF OTHER PRISONERS”

since been separated and Antonia, falling ill again, had been moved for further medical treatment to Leipzig.

During the spring they were moved to Dachau - the very first of the Nazi concentration camps, situated a few miles northwest of Munich - and were housed alongside the families of those who had been part of the assassination plot.

The Allies continued their relentless advance across Germany, and in April 1945 Dachau was discovered by the United States Army. All of the Wittelsbach children were eventually released at the end of the month, along with the thousands of other prisoners. It was estimated that around 10,000 of the over 30,000 inmates were ill at the time of liberation.

The five princesses slowly made their way to Luxembourg, where they found their mother recuperating. They were soon joined by Henry. Rupprecht had already returned to Bavaria to reclaim some of his royal residencies. With some too damaged to be inhabitable and others sold to the government, he made the southern Schloss Leutstetten his chief home.

Antonia never made a full recovery from her time in captivity and, having vowed to never return to Germany again, she passed away less than a decade after her emancipation in Switzerland at the age of just 54. Rupprecht died a little over a year later in 1955 at the age of 86. He was given a complete state funeral in line with tradition and buried in the grounds of the Theatine Church of Saint Cajetan in Munich between his first wife and his eldest son.

A man of dignity and firmly upheld morals, Rupprecht had served his country on the battlefield and in the corridors of power with courage, daring to stand against tyranny when few else would.

Opened in 1933, Dachau, the first Nazi concentration camp, housed over 200,000 inmates during its existence, around 41,000 of whom were killed

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EMPEROR HIROHITO IN WORLD WAR II

The role Japan's emperor played in World War II is a matter of great debate, some painting him a helpless pacifist, others a war criminal

WRITTEN BY HARETH AL BUSTANI

On 14 August 1945, Japan's Emperor Hirohito delivered a radio address surrendering to the Allied forces. The first time an emperor had ever spoken directly to the common people, even cloaked in esoteric courtly dialect, it shattered the illusion of his supposed divinity. In the aftermath, as his underlings were held to account for the country's war of aggression, the emperor's own role became a matter of great controversy.

The oldest continuous royal family in the world, the Japanese imperial line traces its lineage back to the 660 BCE and Emperor Jimmu, said to descend from the sun goddess, Amaterasu. Although the country's samurai warrior class reduced the throne to a religious figurehead, during the 19th century Meiji Restoration, a group of reformists recentred the country's political system around the Emperor Meiji. Under the new constitution, the emperor was the ultimate authority, immune from prosecution and the supreme commander of the army and navy. However, he was expected to rule as a constitutional monarch, acting upon the advice of his appointed officials.

In the ensuing decades, as Japan modernised its armed forces, it adopted an aggressive expansionist attitude, bolstered by military successes against China and Russia. By the time Emperor Hirohito ascended to the throne on Christmas Day in 1926, the country was in the throes of a radical militant movement. Just two years into his reign, when Japan's Manchuria-based Kwantung Army assassinated a Chinese warlord, Hirohito had Prime Minister Tanaka assure him the colonel responsible would be court-martialled. When the prime minister failed to do so, the emperor roared, "Why don't you resign?" Tanaka did, and his cabinet was dissolved soon after. Lamenting his actions, Hirohito vowed to never again veto the cabinet and to approve all their decisions, even if he disagreed with them.

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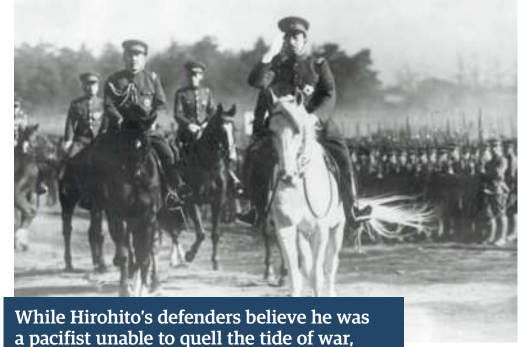
As Japan entered the 1930s, fundamentalist scholars and officers promoted an ultranationalist cocktail, bringing together the country's indigenous Shintō faith, a corrupted version of the samurai code of Bushidō and a Social Darwinist view of Japan's inherent supremacy over Asia. The emperor himself, elevated to a living god, was the heart of Japanese unity; inseparable from the state and the bond that held together all Japanese people, regardless of their social class, religion or political views.

Although Japan officially entered the Pacific theatre of World War II in 1941, its campaign in China began a decade earlier when the Kwantung Army invaded Manchuria. Hirohito did not object to war with China but wished to contain it enough to avoid treading on British or American toes. Though his younger brother, Prince Chichibu, urged him to take the reins of government, he declined, preferring to rule in the tradition established by his grandfather Emperor Meiji. However, the very next year he broke protocol by directly ordering a general to limit hostilities to Shanghai, which he did.

In the ensuing years Hirohito exercised his role masterfully, influencing policy not by enforcing his will but through his proxies: courtiers, politicians, army and navy officials, businessmen and other leading figures. He did his best to remain well informed, voicing his thoughts to officials in private. However, his hand was forced once again on 26 February 1936 when a group of young soldiers attempted a coup. Believing the prime minister had been killed, the emperor took control, ordering the uprising be quashed and the rebels executed. He would later claim this was the last time he ever directly intervened in matters of state.

In November 1937, having seized Shanghai, Japanese forces descended on Nanking. As the Chinese war escalated, Hirohito established an imperial headquarters and reorganised the command structure, streamlining the chain of command. When Nanking fell, many nationalist soldiers hid themselves among the civilians, which Japanese soldiers took as a justification to massacre the populace. Far from commissioning an investigation, in December 1938, Hirohito signed off on an order that led to annihilation campaigns, seeking to destroy "enemies pretending to be local people". The policy paved the way for widespread systematic genocide, resulting in millions of civilian deaths.

By now, Japan was gripped by a full-blown cult of death, devoted to expanding the Japanese empire at all costs. Those who believe Hirohito bore no responsibility for Japan's actions in World War II claim that the peace-seeking emperor supposedly found himself a lone voice among a sea of hardline hawks. Three times in 1937 Hirohito allegedly attempted to diffuse tensions with Chinese nationalists but was thwarted by senior army staff. When he realised the conflict could not be contained, Hirohito asked Kanji Ishiwara of the Army General Staff to send reinforcements only to be flat out refused.



While Hirohito's defenders believe he was a pacifist unable to quell the tide of war, others claim he played a leading role in Japan's campaign of aggression

In 1938, he told the army's chief of staff and the war minister that he was "disgusted" by the army's behaviour. "Men at the front defied orders from central headquarters to employ despicable methods that disgrace our imperial armed forces." After the escalation of 1937, he would later claim the military simply could not be stopped. However, in 1939, he directly ordered the Kwantung Army to engage an invading Soviet contingent, and then reversed it. Both times they did as he commanded, demonstrating the emperor's very real power and control over the military.

Amid Japan's expansionist designs, Hirohito was still determined to avoid conflict with Britain and the United States, believing that any war with them would be one "of reckless abandon". Thus, when Hitler and Stalin signed a non-aggression pact in August 1939, he ordered the prime minister to build

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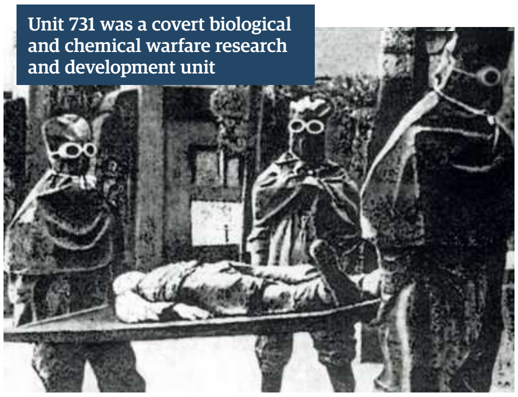
JAPAN'S WAR CRIMES

ALTHOUGH THE JAPANESE ARMY COMMITTED A STRING OF ATROCITIES ACROSS ASIA, THE EMPEROR'S KNOWLEDGE OF THEM IS A MATTER OF DEBATE



Unit 731 was a covert biological and chemical warfare research and development unit

Despite being banned by the Treaty of Versailles, in 1937 Hirohito signed off on the use of poison gas across China and Mongolia. In March 1939, permission was granted to use 15,000 canisters of gas to give Japanese troops "the feeling of victory". In July 1941, however, when Japan moved into southern French Indochina, the army chief of staff banned chemical weapons, not wanting to use them against the US or Britain, who could respond in kind.

In 1936, Hirohito also approved a memo establishing the Kwantung Army Epidemic Prevention Department, including the notorious Unit 731. Operating out of northeast China, the facility brought in bacteriologists, pathologists, physiologists and researchers to develop biological weapons, and similarly depraved units popped up across other occupied territories.

These units introduced typhoid bacillus into Soviet water supplies before dropping fleas infected with plague over the city of Ningbo in 1940. Their artificial epidemics are believed to have killed hundreds of thousands of people.

In the course of its 'research' Unit 731 infected people with diseases and performed live vivisections without anaesthetic. They famously discovered how to treat frostbite by intentionally freezing prisoners' arms and experimenting on them. While there is no evidence Hirohito knew what was being done, he was passionate about science, and had he seen documents pertaining to specific research, he probably would have understood them.

Even after the atom bombs were dropped over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Hirohito had to contend with suicidal generals before surrendering

closer ties with the US and Britain. Bizarrely, when a German bomber set the British Museum ablaze in September, Hirohito asked an advisor if it was worth mediating between Britain and Germany "in order to avoid any further destruction of Britain's cultural assets". He was told it was not. With France defeated and Britain on the ropes, he went on to orchestrate the appointment of pro-British and pro-American Admiral Yonai. However, Yonai was replaced soon after by Fumimaro Konoe, who backed the foreign minister's negotiations with Germany, pushing even the reluctant navy to acquiesce.

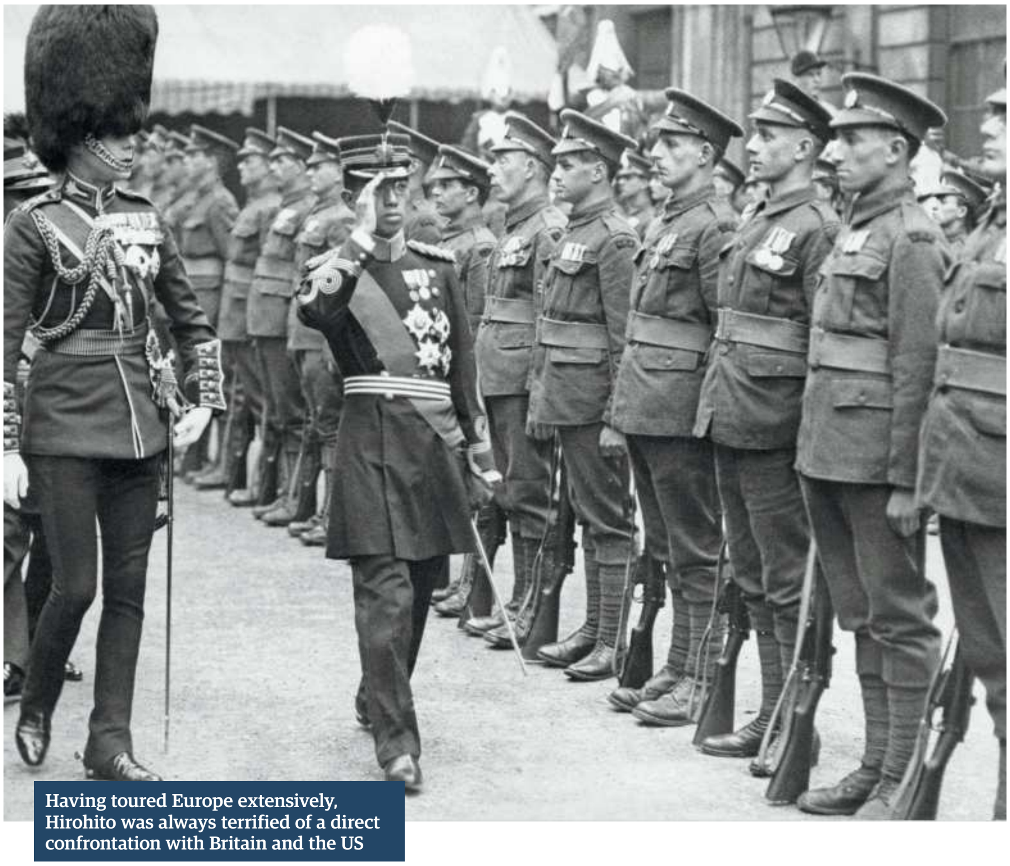
Hirohito wanted to wait and see "how German-Russian relations" panned out, before committing to an alliance, and when Konoe assured him the Nazis could be trusted, he retorted, "I often heard that the result of the naval exercises always turned out to be Japan's defeat against the US." However, his warnings were in vain – Japan signed the Tripartite Pact on 27 September, formally allying with Germany and Italy.

On 22 June 1941, Hirohito's worst fears were confirmed when Germany invaded the USSR. When Foreign Minister Matsuoka suggested Japan strike Russia while the iron was hot, Hirohito had Konoe dissolve his cabinet, though Matsuoka continued to influence decision-making. After Japan moved on Indochina on 23 July, Hirohito was stunned at how quickly the US placed a full oil embargo on the empire. Knowing Japan could not last two years without this resource, Hirohito decided it would be best to strike a decisive blow and then negotiate from a position of strength to end the war quickly. However, the Tripartite Pact, which forbade either Germany, Italy or Japan from surrendering individually, made this impossible without a colossal loss of face.

At an imperial conference on 6 September the emperor read a poem written by Emperor Meiji, a line of which read, "Since we are all brothers in this world, why is there such turmoil?". Konoe, "struck with awe", resigned as prime minister to be replaced by General Tojo. In November, Hirohito finally gave in, agreeing that if negotiations were not complete by December Japan would go to war. Eager to adapt to this new reality, he increasingly asked questions about the state of Japan's military and the effects of weather on operations in Malaya and Hong Kong. He even inquired whether he should ask the Pope to mediate.

As war drew nearer, the navy and army told Hirohito of their plans to launch a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, continuously assuring him Japan could win a protracted engagement. Admiral Yamamoto pointed out that war should be declared half an hour beforehand, otherwise the attack could risk raising American morale, rather than achieving the intended deflation of the American public's resolve.

On 1 December, the emperor finally ratified the decision to go to war with America with what Tojo called "great difficulties". Hirohito felt that declining would not only breach his role as constitutional monarch but lead to a coup and mass assassinations.



Having toured Europe extensively, Hirohito was always terrified of a direct confrontation with Britain and the US

In 1952, the year the peace treaty came into effect, Hirohito was prevented from giving a speech expressing 'remorse' by the prime minister

On 7 December 1941, the attack on Pearl Harbor was unleashed before a declaration of war, dragging the US into World War II. Japan followed its "miraculous victory" with a blitzkrieg campaign through Malaya, Burma, Borneo, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore and Hong Kong. On 12 February 1942, Hirohito told the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal that he wanted to negotiate a quick end to the war. When Japan lost the Stanley Mountain Range in New Guinea later that year, he was desperate to "give the enemy one good bashing somewhere, and then seize a chance for peace". However, on another occasion he said, "For the sake of peace and humanity, we shouldn't let the war drag on," only to add, "on the other hand, we can't give up our [newly won] resources in the south half-way through exploiting them".

In September 1944, with the war turning against the Axis, the prime minister suggested allowing Chinese nationalists to form a coalition government and returning Hong Kong to them to free up troops for the Pacific. In response, Hirohito harangued him, saying it would look like weakness, deflate morale and compromise their holdings in "Burma, Thailand, the Philippines, and other areas".

In February 1945, Konoe desperately urged the emperor to overrule his fanatical military extremists and put an end to the war. Hirohito allegedly replied that the army's chief of staff, Yoshijirō Umezu, "says we should fight to the bitter end because the Americans will not budge in their aim to destroy our imperial house". He added, "Umezu and the navy say that, if we can lure the Americans to Taiwan, we can bash them there. So, I think we should do that first, then resort to diplomatic means." Even after the fall of Okinawa - which Hirohito considered the "last decisive battle" - killed 90,000 Japanese soldiers and 150,000 citizens, he still hoped to deal a counter-blow in China and approved an order arming every citizen of Japan.

In his defence, Japan's imperial death cult made surrender an impossible proposition. Hirohito was the very symbol of kokutai, or national unity. Citizens who risked their lives rescuing his images were celebrated as heroes, and those who failed committed suicide in shame. At Okinawa alone, 2,000 soldiers embarked on suicidal kamikaze attacks, and villagers were told to kill their families and themselves, all in his name. Even after both atomic bombs were dropped opinion was split, with one general remarking, "Would it not be wondrous for the whole nation to be destroyed like a beautiful flower?"

However, after further debate and an attempted coup, Hirohito finally announced the surrender during his 14 August radio address. Aghast, fundamentalist soldiers committed the ritualistic samurai act of seppuku, or belly-cutting. However, Hirohito never actually used the word surrender, nor did he accept moral responsibility for the war - something that remains a source of conflict between Japan, China and both North and South Korea to this day.

In the aftermath, as scores of senior Japanese officials were prosecuted for their roles in the country's "programme of aggression", many difficult questions circled Emperor Hirohito. While the US Senate wanted him to be tried as a war criminal, General Douglas MacArthur said that if the emperor was arrested he would need a million soldiers to maintain order. Although Hirohito had offered to abdicate, the US instead had him agree to deny his divinity and sign a new constitution, reducing him to a figurehead and renouncing war forever. In 1952, Hirohito did hope to deliver a speech, including the word "remorse", but the prime minister quashed it.

Even after his death the emperor remains a controversial figure, with some arguing he was a pacifist limited by tradition and circumstance, while others claiming he was at the centre of Japan's campaign of aggression. Regardless, he continued to serve as a desperately needed symbol of unity and a source of comfort and stability to the war-ravaged Japanese people in their time of healing.

By WWII, Japan's emperor was the focal point of a militant ultranationalist movement drawing from the Shintō faith, Bushidō code and Social Darwinism

Hirohito was informed in advance of the plans for a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor

THE EMPEROR'S FAMILY

THE IMPERIAL FAMILY MAY HAVE BEEN COMPLICIT IN THE ARMY'S WORST EXCESSES

In November 1937, Hirohito's uncle Prince Asaka took charge of the Japanese soldiers advancing on the Chinese capital of Nanking. While his intelligence officer claimed responsibility, Asaka is believed to have issued the "kill all captives" order, sparking off the Nanking Massacre, an orgy of violence in which hundreds of thousands of unarmed soldiers and civilians were brutalised and murdered.

A top-secret 1938 memo drafted by Hirohito's uncle-in-law, Prince Higashikuni, was discovered in 1985, authorising the use of poison gas against Chinese soldiers. Higashikuni told his commanders to lodge their own complaints, claiming the Chinese had used chemical weapons, and instructed them not to use them against other forces, such as the Soviets.

The emperor's cousin, Prince Takeda, served as financial officer for the Kwantung Army in Manchuria. He controlled the purse strings and visit permits for Unit 731 and would have toured the camp extensively. Meanwhile, Prince Chichibu, the emperor's ultranationalist brother, supposedly attended Unit 731's director Shirō Ishii's lectures and vivisections.

In 1940, Hirohito's brother, Prince Mikasa, toured the notorious Unit 731, where he was shown footage of bombs being loaded with bubonic plague and dropped over the city of Ningbo. He was so distraught at the film he complained about it to the emperor. Mikasa would later denounce the country's "policy of aggression" in a suppressed 1944 speech, blasting Japanese soldiers for using Chinese prisoners for bayonet practice.

Chinese prisoners being used for bayonet practice

DUTCH COURAGE

As WWII ravaged the Netherlands and the Dutch found themselves living a nightmare under Nazi domination, Queen Wilhelmina became a beacon of hope

WRITTEN BY HARRY CUNNINGHAM

There are many remarkable things about Queen Wilhelmina's life and reign. If the fact of her ever taking the throne in the first place was not extraordinary enough - because of the semi-Salic law which governed the succession, she was preceded by an elder brother and a great uncle - then her fiery, outspoken character in an age when women still had few rights and people feared the absolutist pull of a political monarch was surely even more incredible. But perhaps the most remarkable thing about the very first queen regnant of the Netherlands was that the institution she embodied for nearly 58 years survived at all. Wilhelmina's voluntary abdication in 1948 was as much a symbol of a modern progressive monarchy as it was a potent act of triumph, a message to the world that, having weathered the tempestuous storm of extremism that rocked the continent and brought down so many of her royal neighbours, she was free to lay down the crown at a time of her choosing.

Wilhelmina was born in 1880 when the Netherlands was not a major player on the world stage. The country was neighboured on one side by a recently unified and imperially ambitious Germany, and across the North Sea by the United Kingdom, a global, industrialised superpower with a monarchy stretching back nearly 1,000 years and an empire on which the sun never set. The Austro-Hungarian Empire in the east was also vast and expansive.

A strictly monarchical system was also a relatively new concept to the Netherlands. For much of its history it had been a somewhat fractious republic, perhaps in part due to it being a forward-thinking melting pot of intellect, commerce and trade in Early Modern Europe. A stadtholder or steward who took the title Prince of Orange had once ruled the country, but after Napoleon was defeated in 1815, William I declared the Netherlands a kingdom and installed himself as king. Dutch kings, therefore, often struggled for identity and prestige alongside the monarchs of these grand imperial powers. Although at the start of the 19th century this made the Netherlands appear a relatively weak and small nation, the fact that the Dutch did not join in with the politics of expansionism through the alliance system meant that the nation was in a stronger position at the end of World War I.

Wilhelmina had a happy childhood. King William III was a doting father and by all accounts a kind man. However, he was gravely ill - reading

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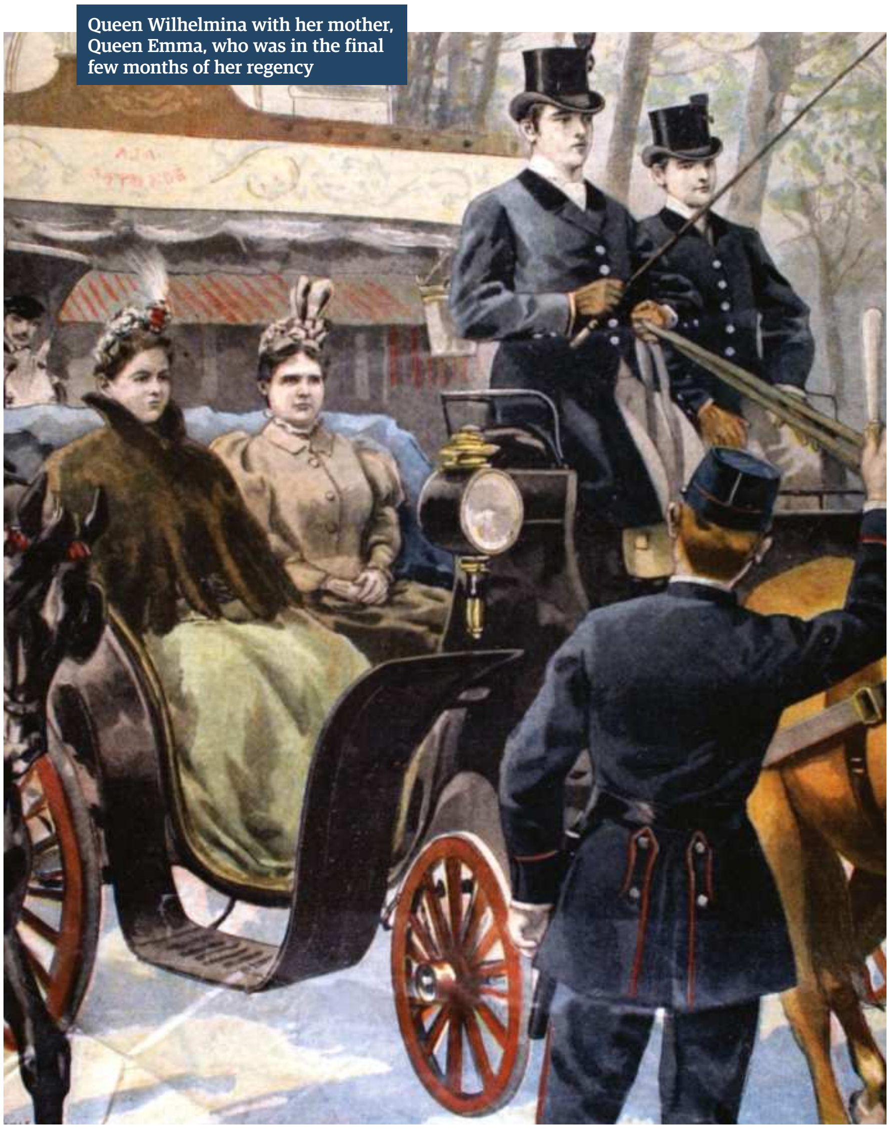
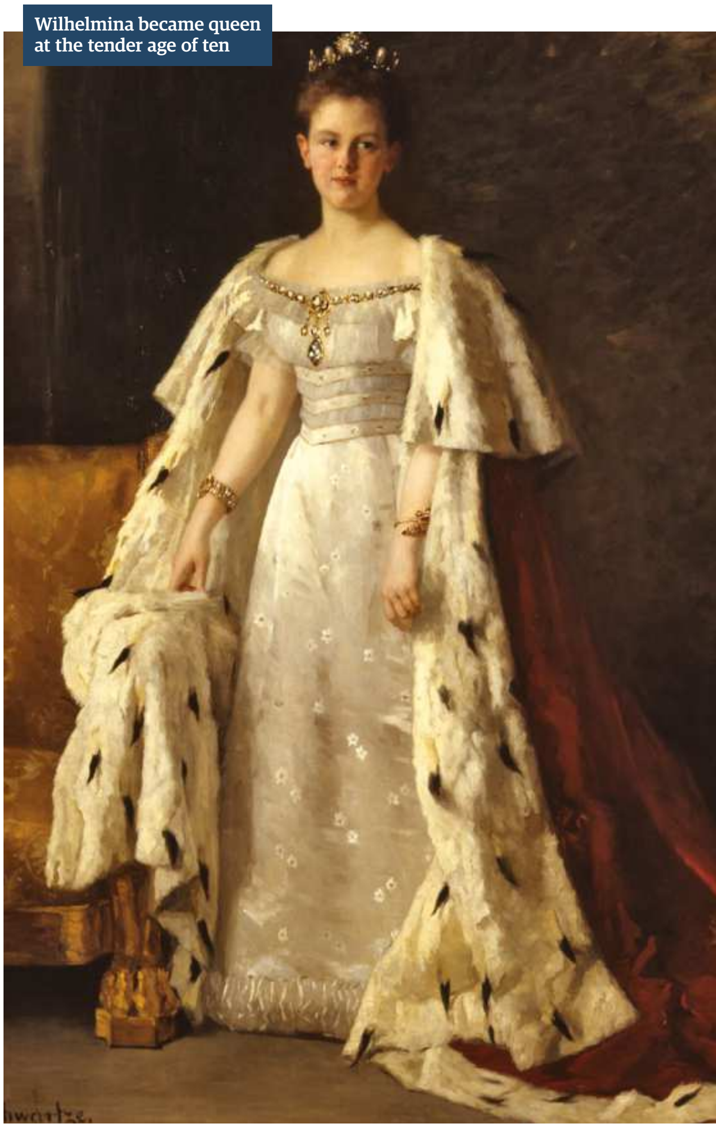


Queen Wilhelmina with her mother, Queen Emma, who was in the final few months of her regency



Wilhelmina became queen at the tender age of ten

between the lines it appears he had dementia, though because of the sensitive nature of the condition, it was not widely referred to or understood in the terms it is today. As a result Wilhelmina gradually saw less and less of her father. At the same time, her chances of inheriting the throne from her father grew stronger. Prince Frederick, Wilhelmina's great uncle - her grandfather's brother - passed away in 1881 and in 1884 her own half-brother Alexander, Prince of Orange, also died. Wilhelmina was now poised to take over the throne. Sadly, however, the king was in no position to coach his daughter in the intricacies of being a successful monarch, training that she, more than any other Dutch monarch, could have benefited from. He died in 1890.

In her autobiography, Wilhelmina recalls the day that she succeeded to the throne:

"From that moment many things changed, particularly in my own life. My undisturbed playing had come to an end; I had to be present all the time when Mother received people who came to offer their condolences. And that deathly silence everywhere, and the closed shutters, all those black figures with long veils, in the house too, and, worst of all, Mother so sad and wrapped in such a terrifying lot of crape! It was more than I could bear."

From the age of ten until she reached the age of majority in 1898, the country was left in the hands of Wilhelmina's mother, Queen Emma of Waldeck and Pyrmont, an exceptionally kind-hearted and strong woman who would become a role model for Wilhelmina.

But Queen Wilhelmina's reign would be blighted and dominated by war. Although the Netherlands had stayed neutral throughout World War I, it was a feat only managed by commitment to international law. The army was mobilised and Wilhelmina herself had to be careful that her movements

"QUEEN WILHELMINA'S REIGN WOULD BE BLIGHTED AND DOMINATED BY WAR" could not be interpreted as support for either side. As a result, when World War I came to an end and other European nations were recovering, the Netherlands, whose industries had not been completely obliterated, was able to capitalise on the trade opportunities.

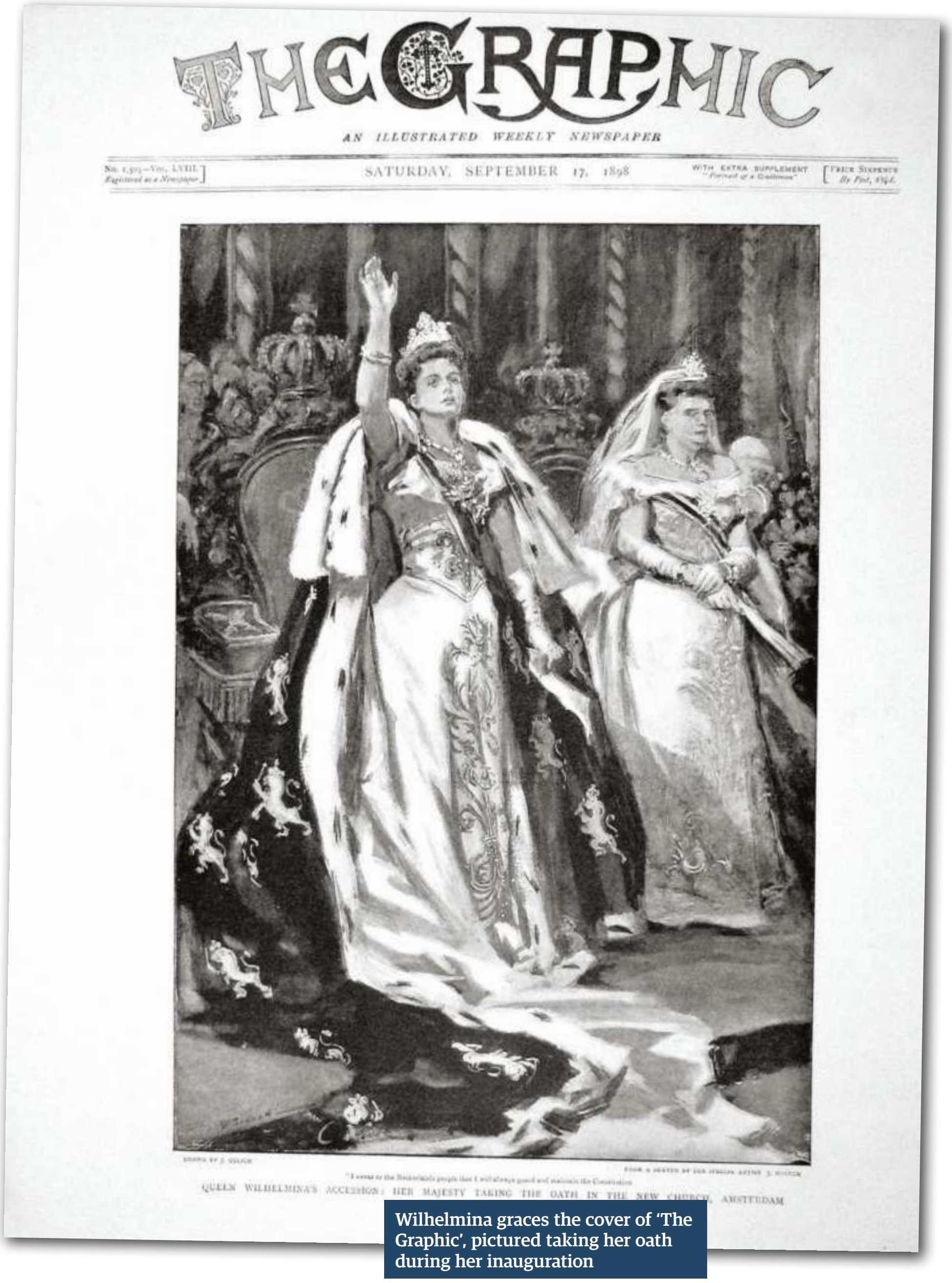
But because a policy of neutrality had worked so well for the Netherlands in World War I, many in the government believed they would be able to stay out of World War II – that is, right up until Hitler invaded Poland. Queen Wilhelmina herself writes in her book, how "only at that moment did many people in Holland recognise the danger that threatened them. They had been quietly asleep on the pillow called neutrality." Over the coming months Hitler and the Nazis, together with the Soviet Union with whom they had signed a pact in 1939, marched through Eastern Europe with unstoppable force, setting their sights first on parts of Scandinavia and then inevitably on Western Europe. Despite clear promises that Dutch neutrality would once again be maintained, German forces crossed the border on 9 May 1940. Queen Wilhelmina was staying in her official residence: the Huis ten Bosch Palace in The Hague. Paratroopers were dropped onto the city and an aircraft crashed into a nearby park. It was obvious that the royal family were the target.

From an air raid shelter in the early hours of the morning on 10 May, Wilhelmina addressed her people: "I hereby raise a fierce protest against this unexampled violation of good faith and outrage upon all that is proper between civilised states. I and my government will continue to do our duty. You will do yours, everywhere and in all circumstances, each in the place he occupies, with the utmost vigilance and the inner peace and devotion which a clear conscience affords."

It had always been Wilhelmina's plan to evacuate her daughter, Princess Juliana, and her children to safety in Britain, but Wilhelmina herself had hoped to remain in the country for solidarity's sake. Despite her being a constitutional monarch, according to Louis de Jong in *The Netherlands And Nazi Germany*, she "abhorred National Socialism," naturally, so it was "unthinkable to her to ever be put in a position where she would have to bow to the demands of that brutal upstart Adolf Hitler." On 12 May, a British destroyer took Princess Juliana, her husband Prince Bernhard and their two children to Britain, a risky mission since the ship did not have cover by the airforce.

The following day when the Germans had virtually taken the country, another ship arrived to take Wilhelmina. But unlike her daughter, she had wanted to go to the south of the country, to Zeeland Flanders. But by the time they had set sail the situation was so dire that Wilhelmina's safety could not be guaranteed if they landed in the Netherlands. Wilhelmina accepted this advice "in tears", according to de Jong, and the ship headed for Britain, where she was met by King George VI and Queen Elizabeth who invited them to stay at Buckingham Palace. Wilhelmina felt that it was her duty to stay in the Netherlands and was worried that her departure might cause resentment. As a monarch she had the privilege of being able to leave of her own free will, but many Dutch citizens, including many Jews, had no choice but to stay and bear the brunt of Hitler's unimaginable regime. This disconnect between the monarchy and the people had already led to the overthrow and murder of Tsar Nicholas II of Russia and his entire family in 1918 and the flight of King Alfonso XIII of Spain and Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany, among others. But Wilhelmina was deeply concerned about this disconnect, not just because it had the potential to jeopardise her own personal position as monarch, but because she knew that without a symbol – a beacon of light in this gravest of crises – then her people might turn against one another and allow the dark politics of nationalism to prosper.

In response to these fears, Wilhelmina put out a statement of intent within hours of arriving in Britain. The statement explained her decision to retreat to Britain, reassured the Dutch people that the government would still function in exile, and explained that the overseas territories were still



THE GRAPHIC

AN ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1898

WITH EXTRA SUPPLEMENT

PRICE SIXPENCE

QUEEN WILHELMINA'S ACCESSION: HER MAJESTY TAKING THE OATH IN THE NEW CHURCH, AMSTERDAM

Wilhelmina graces the cover of 'The Graphic', pictured taking her oath during her inauguration

The Huis ten Bosch Palace in The Hague, where Wilhelmina was staying in the days leading up to the Nazi invasion

under Dutch control. It ended with the following rousing commitment:

"The Netherlands will recover its entire European territory with God's help. Remember the disasters of former centuries which the country overcame, and do all you can in the best interests of the nation, as we shall on our part. Long live the Fatherland."

After the departure of Princess Juliana and her family to Canada, Wilhelmina resided first in Eaton Square and then in Chester Square, both in Belgravia, where she set up the government in exile. With parliament effectively dissolved, the relationship between the Crown and the executive was more to Wilhelmina's liking; without fear of being reproached or causing a constitutional crisis, she could have more of an influence on how to tackle Hitler. Her conservative Prime Minister, Dirk Jan de Geer, who had begun a second nonconsecutive term in 1939, felt that the war was all but lost and that the government had to begin negotiating with Hitler in order to secure a favourable peace agreement. He and other members of the cabinet also believed that the government in exile should be moved to the Dutch colony of Batavia in the East Indies. Wilhelmina was not impressed. Soon after she informed him that she no longer had confidence in him. He resigned without resistance and she appointed Pieter Sjoerds Gerbrandy in September 1940. With a new premier in place, Wilhelmina set about trying to connect with her people in the Netherlands through a series of radio broadcasts on Radio Oranje, named after the royal house of Orange to which she belonged. The radio programme was also broadcast by the BBC.

Wilhelmina felt that one of the biggest challenges of the war was that her people, like all those in Europe, felt a sense of hopelessness and despair. Such a feeling could have a detrimental effect on any resistance to Hitler. In order to boost morale and give the people something to look forward to, Wilhelmina devised a reform programme for the Netherlands with Gerbrandy that would be rolled out when the Allies won the war. She promised

"WILHELMINA REASSURED HER PEOPLE THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD STILL FUNCTION IN EXILE"

THE HEIR IN EXILE

DURING WWII WILHELMINA'S DAUGHTER, PRINCESS JULIANA, TOOK REFUGE IN CANADAT

Shortly after Wilhelmina joined her daughter at Buckingham Palace in Britain, plans were made to send Princess Juliana and her daughters to Canada in anticipation of a British invasion. Juliana's husband, Prince Bernhard, would join them in 1941. Wilhelmina would stay in London for as long as possible, where she would set up the government in exile. If Britain was invaded, Wilhelmina would try to join her daughter but if this was not possible, her private secretary had orders to shoot her.

Juliana went to stay with Wilhelmina's cousin, Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone, in Ottawa. At the time the Countess' husband, the Earl of Athlone, had just been appointed the Governor General. The Dutch royal family were worried that because they had fled their homeland, they would be seen as traitors to their country and anti-monarchist sentiment might ensue. Juliana understood the importance of reassuring her people, so in a radio broadcast made shortly after her arrival, Juliana spoke to reassure the Dutch people: "Do not give me your pity," she said. "Pity is for the weak and our terrible fate has made us stronger than ever before." According to her obituary in The Telegraph, Juliana also made the effort to be visibly involved with the war effort from afar. She visited the Dutch colonies in South America and donated blood.

In 1943, Juliana was heavily pregnant with her third child. This was a potentially complicated situation because if Juliana gave birth in Canada, the child would be granted Canadian citizenship, which would have proved highly complicated if the child was a boy and superseded Juliana's two elder daughters. The Dutch government found a solution by temporarily granting the maternity ward of the hospital 'international territory' status.

The Dutch royal family in exile in Ottawa, Canada

to listen to her people and create a new world following the liberation. And she also offered specific proposals, such as calling for the colonies in the West Indies and elsewhere to be treated as equal partners with the kingdom in Europe.

For all her life, Wilhelmina had been constrained, muzzled by her role as a constitutional monarch, a sacrosanct doctrine. Any flirtation with straight-talk, hyperbole or controversy had always been overridden by the need for statesmanship and unity, and the burning flame of politics that shines so brightly in us all had to at least appear as if it had been permanently extinguished, however strong the sense of feeling. But now, united with her people by a common cause, Wilhelmina could become the queen and leader she had always wanted to be. She referred to Germans as 'the huns' and gave frank advice about all aspects of war policy, including the decision of the Allies to align themselves with Russia.

"Today it is Russia," she said on 22 June 1941, the day Germany began Operation Barbarossa to

Wilhelmina crossing the Belgian-Dutch border in order to go into liberated Dutch territory and join her subjects in 1945

HITLER'S NETHERLANDS

LIFE FOR WILHELMINA'S SUBJECTS UNDER THE FÜHRER WAS UNIMAGINABLY BLEAK

As a Nazi invasion became a reality, thousands of Jewish people attempted to flee to Britain and join their queen. Those that didn't get away in time either had to go into hiding – like Otto Frank and his family including his daughter, Anne, who hid in the secret annexe of the house where he worked – or try to resist the new regime.

As Louis de Jong explains, at first, "The Nazis didn't want any resistance; they insisted on compliance" and they created "a situation akin to the one that had been realised in Germany, in which the non-Jewish majority would take little notice of what happened to Jews"; one of the methods used to do this was by making assisting Jews – in any way – a crime. But the Dutch people did not give up. When the Nazis murdered 400 Jews in broad daylight, there was a huge public protest, involving virtually the entire workforce of Amsterdam. The protest lasted for two days.

Realising they could not simply deport every Dutch Jew without a serious fight, the Nazi leadership began to rely on more devious tactics. De Jong explains how Nazi officials deliberately understated the true extent of the Holocaust. They insisted that Jews were being deported to labour camps and not murdered en masse. Those already in the camps were ordered to write letters home, telling their families and friends that they were being treated well. This disinformation campaign was also used to persuade the Jewish Council and the churches to appease the regime in return for concessions for certain Jewish groups, though the Nazis often reneged upon these promises anyway.

Although a highly organised resistance campaign, supported by the Dutch people, was quickly established, little could be done to save the Jewish population. Queen Wilhelmina even received intelligence that Hitler was planning to 'liquidate' all Dutch people because of their refusal to appease his sinister and oppressive regime. When the Netherlands was liberated in May 1945, the Dutch people had to come to terms with the fact that, despite their resistance, 112,000 Jewish people, most of the Jewish population in fact, had been systematically murdered.

The city of Rotterdam in ruins, taken during the invasion of the Netherlands in 1940

Crowds flock to the streets on Liberation Day in 1945

Queen Wilhelmina making her first Christmas radio broadcast since the Netherlands had been liberated, in January 1946

> “THE OPTIMISTIC, ROUSING TONE OF HER BROADCASTS HAD NEVER BEEN MORE IMPORTANT”

breach their pact with Russia and invade, “but we know that tomorrow or the day after, the mighty bulwarks of our civilisation and of the principles that are sacred to us, the British Empire and the United States of America, will face the full impact of Hitler’s war machine. For this reason, we shall also fight side by side with the people of Soviet Russia, wherever circumstances may demand it. We shall do this without denying our views of Bolshevism, which are based on our principles: for we must never forget that we reject the principles and practise of Bolshevism unreservedly.”

The effect of these broadcasts was overwhelming. De Jong explains how “those who had been lukewarm about the monarchy or who had even opposed it, changed their feelings and consequently their opinions. One might say that at last, virtually the entire nation accepted Queen Wilhelmina as their queen”. In 1942, after the attacks on Pearl Harbor, Wilhelmina was able to visit the United States and meet President Roosevelt. With the US entering the war, the international treaties which prevented a neutral party entering into any lengthy discussion or offering assistance to the Allies were lifted. After perhaps one of the bleakest periods in European history - in which Hitler seemed almost certain to win - the tables had turned and things were looking up.

It is not surprising, then, that as the fortunes of the Allies turned around and it became more apparent that the war would soon come to an end, Wilhelmina attempted to capitalise on her incredible public approval ratings by trying to secure more autonomy for herself. Wilhelmina reached out to the underground resistance movements, hoping they would form a government or at least stand for election as a new party, which would be more sympathetic towards her views. Dutch politicians were naturally against such a move but so too were members of the resistance, many of whom had differing ideas about how to proceed.

The contempt the Nazis held for the Dutch people because of their part in obstructing the Third Reich cannot be overstated and, as liberation approached, Wilhelmina realised she would return to a country devastated in ways she could not imagine. The optimistic, rousing tone of her broadcasts had never been more important. On 28 November 1944 she gave a speech decrying the cruelty and oppression of the regime but imploring the Dutch people to “help each other and go on helping.” She continued: “You are aware of my great confidence in the distance of our whole people.” On Christmas Day 1944 she reminded her people of Jesus’ sacrifice and the messages of Christmas, and on 24 February 1945 she read out the poem ‘Not In Vain’ by the Dutch poet, Klaas Hanzen Heeroma, which features the poignant lines:

“But if I live to see the liberation
And cheer the victory parade,
God, tell me that this suffering,
This sorrow shall not be betrayed
And resurrect this nation,
finer, wiser,
Than when it went to meet its fate.”

By 13 March 1945, Wilhelmina was finally able to enter the Netherlands. In her autobiography she writes: “Wherever I went, the same emotion and enthusiasm. Everywhere flowers, presents and all sorts of attentions. In every town and village, resistance workers and widows and children of fallen underground fighters were presented to me at my special request...” Wilhelmina also stopped at a bridge in Zeeland Flanders where just hours before the Nazis had executed some soldiers. It was a poignant stop. She got out of her car, took the marguerite (white daisy) off her coat and laid it down. Given everything that had happened and the desolate, even barren nature of the country that the Nazis had left behind, the atmosphere Wilhelmina describes was remarkable. By May 1945, as Germany finally fell, the Dutch government had been restored and the people were able to begin the long, arduous journey to rebuilding their country. A year later a general election returned a parliament of virtually the same composition as 1939.

Thanks to Wilhelmina’s unwavering loyalty and her carefully delivered broadcasts, the spirit of the Dutch people remained strong throughout one of Europe’s darkest periods, and when she relinquished her crown in 1948 in favour of Princess Juliana, after 57 years on the throne, she cemented her place as, arguably, the Netherlands’ greatest monarch.

THE NAZI DUKE

How did a grandson of Queen Victoria and an Eton-educated British duke become an ardent supporter of the world's most reviled regime?

WRITTEN BY HARRY CUNNINGHAM

When we think of the links between the Nazi Party and the British royal family, the name that inevitably comes to mind is the former King Edward VIII. Although nothing has ever been satisfactorily proved about the former king's links to the Führer, public interest in him has overshadowed the role of a royal, long since forgotten, who really did do the unthinkable and actively campaigned for Hitler, without shame. Charles Edward, Duke of Coburg's support for both Kaiser Wilhelm II and the most infamous dictator in history would cast an unwelcome light on both the royal family's heritage and the role of the upper classes in appeasing Hitler's crimes.

Prince Leopold Charles Edward George Albert, known by his middle names Charles Edward, was born on 19 July 1885 and automatically inherited the British titles Second Duke of Albany, Earl of Clarence and Baron Arklow. This was because Charles Edward's father, Prince Leopold, the eighth of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert's nine children, had tragically died only months before his son was born.

The loss of his father would have a profound impact on the way Charles Edward was raised: he would be doted on by women. His mother, Princess Helena of Waldeck-Pyrmont, a German Princess, and his grandmother, Queen Victoria, both played a key role in his upbringing at Claremont House in Surrey. He was also known to be inseparable from his elder sister, Princess Alice of Albany, and as children they had been nicknamed the 'Siamese twins'.

In 1898, at the age of 14, Charles Edward reached the pinnacle of the British establishment when he was sent to Eton College with hopes of attending the University of Oxford – but everything changed in 1899. Charles Edward's uncle, Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, was also the sovereign Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, a title that he had inherited through his own father, Albert, husband to Queen Victoria. It was not a

© Alamy, Getty Images, Mary Evans, Topfoto

very popular title due to the deteriorating relations between Germany and Britain – various members of the British royal family had renounced their claims, and when Alfred had succeeded, he forfeited his seat in the House of Lords. So when Alfred's only son committed suicide and Alfred himself died of cancer a year later, Charles Edward unexpectedly inherited the titles.

Although Germany had become a unified country in 1871, the smaller German states still kept their identities and their monarchs. When it became clear that he would inherit the title, Charles Edward was forced to abandon his life in Britain and head to Coburg. Until he came of age, Prince Ernst of Hohenlohe-Langenburg, Alfred's son-in-law, would act as regent and oversee Charles Edward's education in Germany.

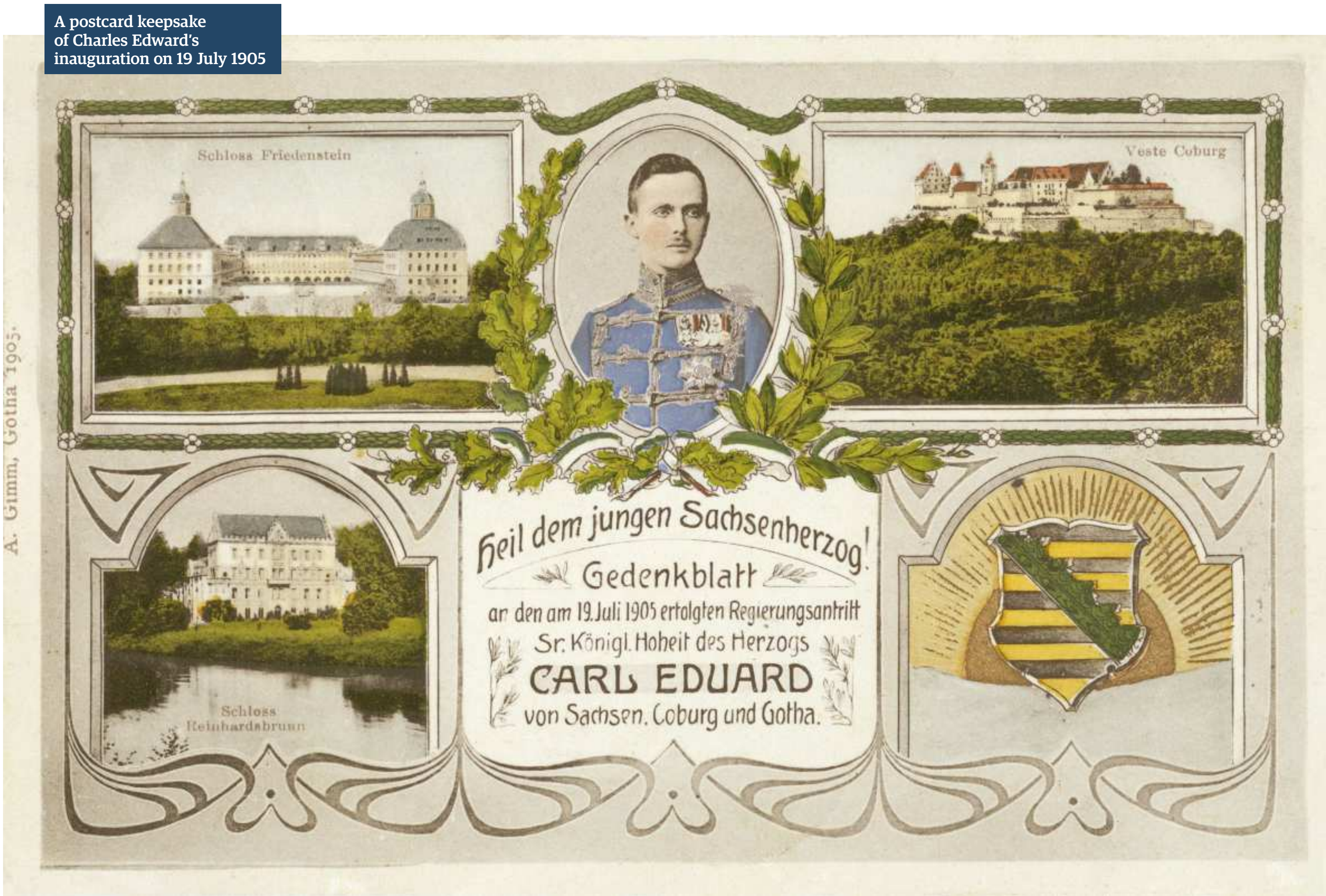
As the arms race between Germany and Britain gathered pace, Charles Edward – or Carl Eduard, the Germanised version of his name that he increasingly adopted – ignored the growing conflict of interest between his two countries and continued to return home to Britain when he could. But Charles Edward could not be torn for very much longer. In September 1914, World War I began in earnest. Opting for duty over personal preference, Charles Edward decided to offer his support for the Germans.

It was a disastrous decision, and would lead to him being isolated in both his native Britain and on the continent. When Germany lost the war, Kaiser Wilhelm II was forced to abdicate and most minor royals, including Charles Edward, were forced to give up their ducal thrones as well. After all, the perceived arrogance and personal ambitions of the German royals – indeed of royals all over Europe – was seen to have resulted in the needless bloodshed of World War I.

King George V had no choice but to condemn his cousin. Charles Edward was denounced as a traitor, stripped of his titles as well as His Royal Highness status and his property was confiscated. King George realised the very real threat to his own throne, from popular discontent if he did not act. In Portugal republican revolutionaries had shot King Carlos I and his successor Manuel II had been deposed by the same movement in 1910. 1917 saw another cousin, Tsar Nicholas II, lose his throne.

So George began a project to reform the role of the British monarchy and distance his family from criticism. He changed the name of the royal house to Windsor, after the castle, in 1917 and tried to remain above politics as Asquith and Lloyd George brought in sweeping democratic reforms. King George also refused shelter to Nicholas Romanov, the former tsar, a decision he would no doubt come to regret when the Bolsheviks later murdered him and his family in 1918.

The impact of all of this on Charles Edward was that, although he was allowed to remain in Germany, he was effectively politically isolated. What Charles Edward wanted more than anything was to feel part of something, to feel accepted and to have a place in a new world order. It is perhaps of little surprise, then, that when a little known ex-soldier, an anti-establishment outsider with strong-held beliefs about Germany's place in Europe and the world, began preaching in beer halls about creating a new German empire, Charles Edward would get on board.


Schloss Friedenstein
Veste Coburg
A. Gimm, Gotha 1905.
Schloss Reinhardsbrunn
Heil dem jungen Sachsenherzog!
Gedenkblatt
an den am 19. Juli 1905 erfolgten Regierungsantritt
Sr. Königl. Hoheit des Herzogs
CARL EDUARD
von Sachsen, Coburg und Gotha.

A postcard keepsake of Charles Edward's inauguration on 19 July 1905

It is important to cast aside our own hindsight and remember that, in the late 1920s and the early 1930s, there was a certain level of sympathy for Hitler, even in Britain. Many people felt the terms of the 1919 Treaty of Versailles had been too harsh and the idea of a strong man who could herald in a new era of prosperity and rebuild the crippled country after the disastrous years of Weimar hyperinflation was very appealing.

Another reason that far-right movements appealed to the Duke of Coburg, and indeed many other British aristocrats, was that they aimed to bring back what the upper classes regarded as traditional values at a time of uncertainty and change. In early-20th-century Britain, the House of Lords was instrumental in fighting Liberal prime ministers Gladstone and Lloyd George on progressive policies such as Home Rule for Ireland, the extension of the franchise and political and economic reform. Conversely, in the Third Reich, Hitler's Enabling Act would give him all but absolute power, allowing him free rein to carry out his plan without opposition in parliament. Meanwhile the role of women was made

Now a fully fledged German prince, Charles Edward would soon have to make a stark choice about whether to serve the duchy over which he was sovereign, or return to his British homeland and abandon his royal duty

THE TITLES DEPRIVATION ACT OF 1917

HOW TO GET RID OF PEERAGES AND ROYAL TITLES THAT ARE NOTORIOUSLY HARD TO REVOKE

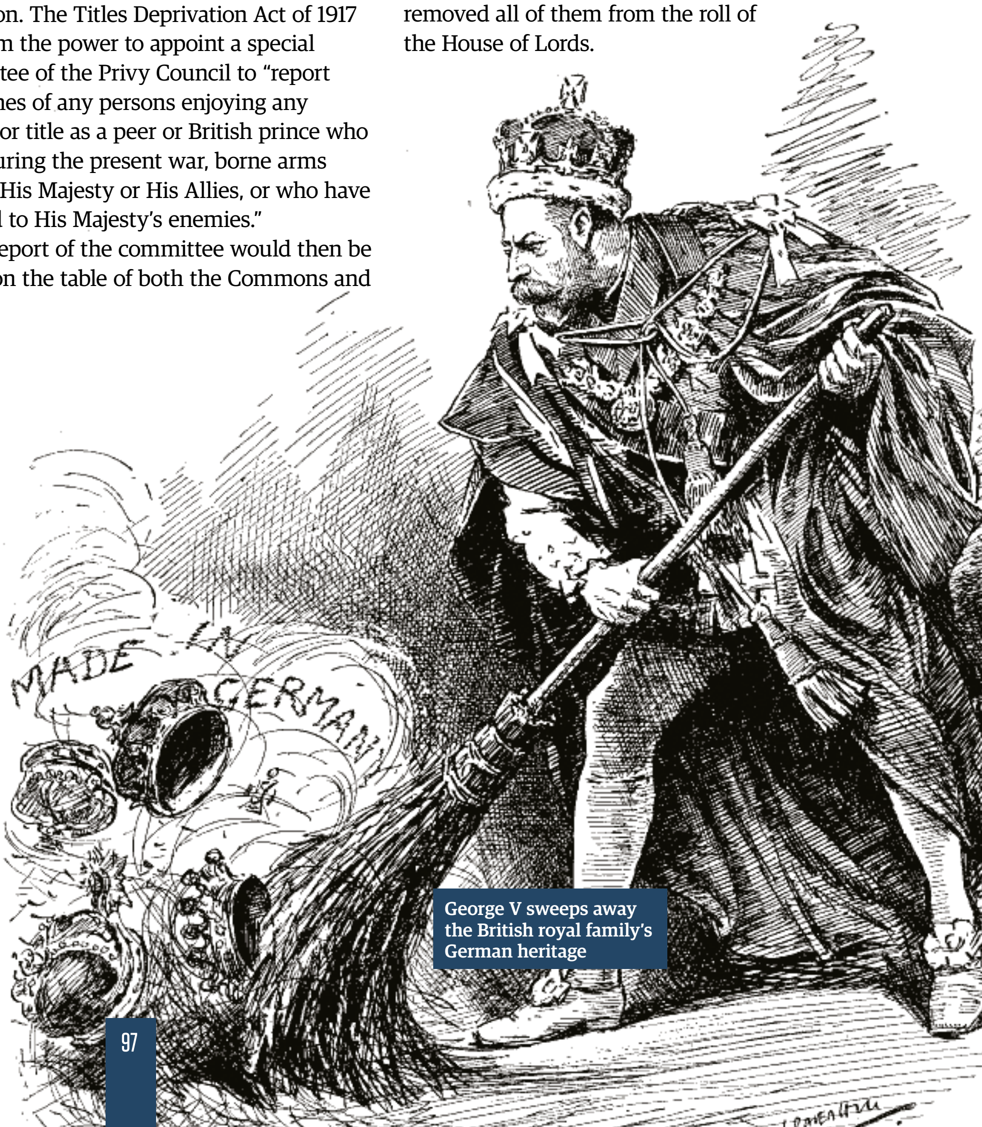
When a royal is gifted a title or a member of the establishment a peerage, it is usually expected they will not only hold that title for the duration of their own life but also pass it on to their descendants for generations to come. Granted by letters patent, which are signed by the monarch, a peerage ordinarily grants the holder a permanent seat in the House of Lords as well as certain other privileges.

Although in recent times laws have been introduced to remove a peer's membership of the House of Lords, rescinding a title of a peer is still rarely done even when a peer - such as Jeffrey, Lord Archer - has been sent to prison because it requires an Act of Parliament.

George V, however, made a notable exception. The Titles Deprivation Act of 1917 gave him the power to appoint a special committee of the Privy Council to "report the names of any persons enjoying any dignity or title as a peer or British prince who have, during the present war, borne arms against His Majesty or His Allies, or who have adhered to His Majesty's enemies."

The report of the committee would then be laid upon the table of both the Commons and the Lords, and if for 40 days neither house passed a motion disapproving of the report, it would be sent back to the King. Any names mentioned in the report would then be removed from the Peerage Roll and all writs, royal warrants and letters patent relating to their titles would be subsequently revoked. The act also gave the descendents of those excluded the right to petition the crown for the restoration of their titles.

The report of the Committee was laid before the house containing the names of Charles Edward, Duke of Albany, Prince Ernest Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, who was a very distant relation descended from George III, and Heinrich Graf von Taaffe, 12th Viscount Taaffe. No objections were made and an Order in Council of 28 March 1919 removed all of them from the roll of the House of Lords.



George V sweeps away the British royal family's German heritage

The duke, third from the left on the front row, poses with the Thuringian Division in 1915 or 1916

> **“HE ACTED LIKE THE PERFECT DIPLOMAT, SMOOTHING OVER THE CRACKS AND GIVING THE IMPRESSION THAT HITLER HAD PERFECTLY BENEVOLENT INTENTIONS”**

abundantly clear, as Hitler’s propaganda minster Joseph Goebbels explained: “The mission of women is to be beautiful and to bring children into the world.”

The idea of a strong national identity was also central to far-right ideology. Some might argue the patriotism of the Third Reich and the way in which Hitler was revered and idealised was not too dissimilar to the early-20th-century view of monarchy by the upper classes: a strong monarch with military credentials, supported by a ruling elite of wealthy aristocrats was seen as a far more effective ruler than a bookish intellectual who strived for peace and prosperity through compromise, philanthropy and extending the franchise to people that the upper classes perceived as being undeserving of the vote.

As well as supporting Hitler in the 1930s and endorsing the Nazis in the German parliament elections, which saw Hitler appointed chancellor in 1933, Charles Edward visited Mussolini’s Italy several times. Intrigued by his achievements, he brought 70 German friends on one of these trips and was greeted by Il Duce himself, who gifted Charles Edward a fascist dagger. Karina Urbach believes what Charles Edward and even Hitler himself admired about Mussolini was that, “Mussolini integrated the Italian royal family into his regime,” though the decision of King Victor Emmanuel III to stay on and attempt to manage or support Mussolini would eventually lead to his downfall at the end of the war.

Because of his admiration for royalty, Hitler was keen to utilise Charles Edward. He was appointed president of the German Red Cross and president of the Anglo-German Fellowship. Charles Edward tried and succeeded in some circles to persuade the British aristocracy that Hitler’s policies were

Charles Edward admired the dictator Benito Mussolini. Here, the two are pictured together in 1938

a means to justify an end: a strong, prosperous Germany. He also reached out to the future Edward VIII, then the Prince of Wales, who was known to be sympathetic to Hitler's aims.

Indeed, contrary to popular belief, many historians believe Hitler did not want to go to war with Britain or Western Europe, at least initially. Rather, his aim was to form an anti-Soviet pact. He did not believe Britain would go through with their ultimatum to declare war if he invaded Poland. And there was lots of sympathy for this viewpoint. Oswald Mosley's Blackshirts hoped to mimic Hitler and Mussolini in Britain. Famous editorials in both the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Mirror* by their proprietor, Viscount Rothermere, entitled "Horrah for the Blackshirts", also offered sympathy for the wider fascist movement at home and abroad by claiming that Hitler and Mussolini were simply trying to fix a broken, outdated political system and appeal to the youth.

Because many people in aristocratic circles privately believed Charles Edward had been treated unfairly, he received a sympathetic ear on his many returns to Britain. This made him incredibly useful to Hitler and he rose to become one of his closest 'go-betweens'. In Britain, Charles Edward hosted informal gatherings. With no estate or formal title of his own, he was forced to rely on the hospitality of his ever loyal sister, Princess Alice, now the Countess of Athlone, who allowed him use of her estate, Brantridge Park, deep in the Sussex countryside.

Hitler was impressed at Charles Edward's ability to network and back channel with the British aristocracy, and Charles Edward was made an informal ambassador for Hitler around the world. He visited Rome and spoke with both King Victor Emmanuel III and Mussolini, and in 1938 made another visit to Italy, this time officially on Hitler's behalf. In 1939, he also visited Poland, where he met the president and laid a wreath on the grave on an unknown solider. He acted like the perfect diplomat, smoothing over the cracks and giving the impression that Hitler had perfectly benevolent intentions to those that he met with.

The relationship between Edward VIII and Charles Edward has been much speculated on. Urbach describes him as "one of the greatest trophies" for the Germans, an assessment that cannot be overstated. Abdication was not a serious prospect until the end of November 1936 so, in the eyes of Hitler, having the king of the largest empire on side would be a huge coup. After all, legally speaking, the king could dissolve parliament and force through new elections.

The way in which the monarchy worked in tandem with the fascist regime in Italy also fascinated Hitler, and his cordial relationship with both Edward VIII and Charles Edward reflects his dream of one day incorporating the monarchy into the Third Reich. Such an alliance merged traditionalism with National Socialism. The continuity and traditionalism of the old order was not only maintained, but the monarchy could be used as a tool to channel patriotism and cultural superiority. Charles Edward, then, was a concrete link between Britain's 1,000-year monarchy and the relatively new German nation.

THE ROYAL PROTECTOR

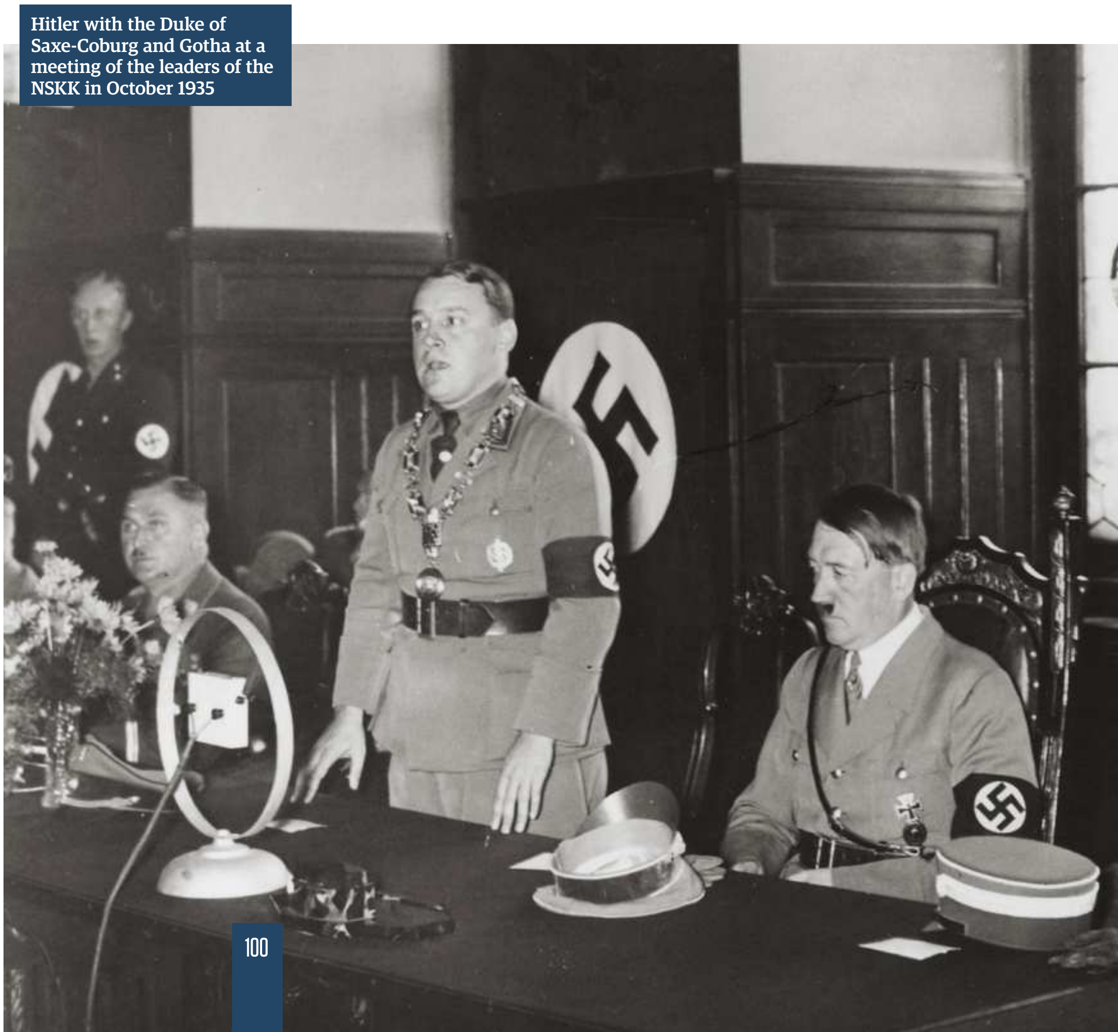
CHARLES' SISTER'S HOME BECAME A SAFEHOUSE FOR EUROPE'S EXILED MONARCHS

Charles Edward and his sister, Princess Alice, maintained a close relationship throughout their lives. When Alice was six, she met Lewis Carroll and complained that, "he was always making grown-up jokes to us," and that she found him, "awfully silly". This shrewd judge of character showed an independent woman, traits that shone through in her decision to remain in close contact with her brother, even as it became clear that he was coming down on the wrong side of history.

In contrast to her brother, Alice's husband, Prince Alexander of Teck, gave up his German titles and was elevated to the British peerage as the Earl of Athlone. Their main residence was Henry III tower at Windsor Castle. The couple's second and more discreet home was at Brantridge Park. During World War II, she and her husband took up residence in Canada, where he was the governor general. While her husband threw himself into the war efforts by visiting troops across the nation, Alice played host to several displaced monarchs, whose countries the Nazis had overrun. Among the sovereigns who moved into the Canadian residence of Rideau Hall were the Crown Prince Olav of Norway, Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands and her heir, Juliana; King Peter of Yugoslavia and King George of Greece among others. Princess Alice was a friend to all, regardless of their politics. It was here that Alice and the other royal ladies of the house set themselves to work, making clothes for the families that had lost their homes and all their possessions during the war.

Princess Alice hosted several displaced monarchs in her home in Canada

After his support for Kaiser Wilhelm II in WWI, Charles Edward was stripped of his British titles


Hitler with the Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha at a meeting of the leaders of the NSKK in October 1935

Photographed here in February 1941, the duke quickly rose to the rank of Oberbereichsleiter in the SA

To what extent Charles Edward had convinced Edward VIII of the merits of Nazism – perhaps the greatest prize of all, even after he became the Duke of Windsor – and more importantly of stronger Anglo-German ties, however, is debatable. What we know is that Edward hinted on more than one occasion that he would not necessarily uphold the silence on political matters required of a constitutional monarch. In November 1936, Edward visited the Bessemer Steel Works in a Welsh mining village and, remarking on the poverty he saw around him, said, "These works brought all these people here. Something must be done to find them work." Many saw it as an incendiary statement, particularly since a Conservative government was in power, whose relationship with the mining community has always been rocky. Yet many ordinary working class people lapped it up because Edward epitomised the strong leadership and commitment to prosperity that brought Hitler and Mussolini to power.

The parts played in 1935 negotiations about an Anglo-German Naval agreement by both Charles Edward and Edward VIII – who was then still the Prince of Wales – also highlight the close relationship the two of them had. Such an agreement would help Hitler defeat Stalin. Charles Edward, annoyed at George V's lack of action, allegedly spoke to the Prince of Wales. On 11 June 1935, the Prince of Wales made a speech at the British Legion suggesting British people should visit Germany and, "stretch out their hand." The British foreign secretary, Sir Samuel Hoare, suddenly agreed to the German's demands. Urbach writes, "It seemed obvious that the successful conclusion of the Naval Agreement had something to do with behind the scenes work. The Duke of Coburg certainly saw it as a great success."

Other than speculation and clever guesswork, the extent of Charles Edward's influence on Edward VIII and other senior members of the royal family is difficult to ascertain. Much of the correspondence contained in the royal archives on the matter is embargoed to protect the integrity of the monarchy. We know that King George V's wife, Queen Mary, was a regular attendee at Charles Edward's 'gatherings' at Brantridge Park, yet, according to the royal archives, she only sent one postcard to him in the 1930s, and copies of her correspondence to Edward VIII and his younger brothers – George VI, who succeeded him after he abdicated, and the Duke of Kent – is closed after 1918.

One tantalising secret glimpse into the links between Charles Edward, the Nazis and senior members of the British royal family might be inferred from a remarkable telegraph that was intercepted from Hitler's bunker in April 1945. It read, "The Fuhrer attaches importance to the President of the Red Cross, the Duke of Coburg, on no account falling into enemy hands." Urbach speculates that this could mean one of two things: "Either Hitler wanted his old confidant, the Duke of Coburg, to be whisked to safety or this was a 'Nero order', i.e. he wanted him to be murdered before the enemy could get hold of him. One thing appeared certain; the secrets that Hitler and the duke shared seemed to be so important that they needed to be forever hidden from public view."

As it did for many people, the war exhausted Charles Edward. He developed arthritis and a tumour on his face. Both his son and son-in-law were killed. Captured by the Americans, he was put in a camp but was judged too ill to stand trial. He pleaded not guilty in abstention and, although acquitted of crimes against humanity, was found guilty of aiding and abetting Nazis by a de-Nazification court in 1949.

Five years later in 1954, after the courts had fined him and stripped him of his property, Charles Edward died in the flat he lived in, just down the road from his old dynastic home, Veste Coburg. It was an unremarkable end for one destined for a life of luxury.

THE PRINCESS IN THE PRISON

How an Italian princess paid the ultimate price for her husband's naivety and political ambitions while working for Hitler's Third Reich

WRITTEN BY NICK SOLDINGER

Shortly after noon on 24 August 1944, prisoners at Buchenwald concentration camp in the heart of Nazi Germany heard what sounded like thunder. The skies that hot summer's day, though, were a brilliant blue, there was not a cloud in sight. The rumbling however, grew ever fiercer and soon the inmates saw what was causing it – a force of 33 US Air Force B-17 heavy bombers. Better known as Flying Fortresses, these heavily armed behemoths lumbered towards the camp with three and half tons of high explosives primed and ready in each aircraft.

They'd come for the nearby armaments factories where many of the camp's inmates toiled as slave labourers. However, a mid-20th century heavy bomber was not a precise weapon of war and many prisoners watched in horror as the bombers – by now roaring directly overhead – began dropping their deadly cargo onto the camp. Among them was Buchenwald's most unlikely inmate, Mafalda Landgrave – better known in her native Italy as Princess Mafalda of Savoy. Diving into a trench, she listened, terrified as the bombs fell ever closer until the nearby cellblock she'd spent the previous year in suddenly erupted in a squall of concrete and steel, burying her.

Princess Mafalda's life began in wealth and privilege. The second daughter of King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy and his wife Queen Elena of Montenegro, she was born in Rome on 2 November 1902. Her childhood was a happy one. Surrounded by books, art and music, she spent her formative years in the secluded Villa Savoia, which lay hidden within a leafy estate in the heart of Rome. Here she would play with her three sisters and little brother Umberto – who was destined to become the last King of Italy. A bright, sensitive girl, she was multilingual (in addition to her native Italian, she spoke four other languages) and an accomplished musician. She would, in time, also inherit a profoundly compassionate worldview from her mother who was a constant champion of good causes.

If harmony and tranquillity had been the backdrops of Mafalda's early life, the rest of it would be spent as a witness to chaos, war

© Alamy, Getty Images

Mafalda, aged four, with her mother Elena and younger brother Umberto. She enjoyed a happy childhood and Elena made sure that it was filled with love

and violent extremism, and the touchpaper of the tumultuous era the adult Mafalda would live through was lit on 28 June 1914 with the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The event triggered the outbreak of World War I and within weeks, Europe was engulfed. Although the rivalries that drove it really had nothing to do with Italy, the country was soon looking for a side to pick. Smelling an opportunity to expand Italy's borders, the country's politicians took a punt on the Allies, and in May 1915, Italy's Prime Minister Antonio Salandra declared war on the Austro-Hungarians. The consequences were to prove disastrous.

Mafalda's childhood came to an abrupt end. The kind, sweet-natured teenager who'd been brought up in a bubble of privilege now found herself accompanying her pious mother on visits to Italy's military hospitals. Here, she encountered men blinded by gas or shattered by bullets and shell blasts, screaming and dying in swollen hospital wards. These shocking sights would leave Mafalda deeply wary of men who sought to reshape the world through armed conflict.

By the time the war ended in 1918, Mafalda was no longer an ingénue. Europe, too, was a vastly different place. The abdication of Germany's Kaiser Wilhelm, the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires, and the Russian Revolution in 1917 had left Europe's centuries-old system of royal rule in tatters. In its place, a new order was emerging, one driven by ideological extremism that would inspire new allegiances and bring about the bloodiest phase of human history to date.

Although Italy had picked the winning side and its monarchy had survived, the country was in turmoil. In 1917, its army had suffered a calamitous defeat to German and Austro-Hungarian troops. The Battle of Caporetto had seen it utterly routed. As the front collapsed and troops fled south, more than 300,000 men were killed, wounded or captured, while a further 600,000 civilians were displaced. It was a catastrophic humiliation for the country's leaders who had swaggered into war two years earlier, believing they could simply grab land from their beleaguered northern neighbours.

The war had also destabilised Italy's economy, and its constitutional government found its authority threatened, first by communism and then by a new far-right populist movement led by Benito Mussolini. The self-styled 'Il Duce' called for an end to the 'weakness' of liberal democracy, the policies of which had led to Caporetto and the post-war financial meltdown. The monarchy could stay, he argued, but the government needed replacing by a totalitarian order under strong leadership. By 1922, Mussolini had bullied his way into power and as Italy's new Prime Minister, he led the country down the road to fascism. Meanwhile, in Germany a similar far-right revolution was brewing that would soon ensure the two countries that had been enemies in WWI would join forces in the next one.

As these seismic political changes were taking place, Princess Mafalda was coming of age, and would soon be expected to start a family. The monarchical system, where it still existed, persisted with its traditions and that included using marriage as a way of brokering power between aristocratic families. As the roaring twenties got underway, Mafalda was romantically linked with everyone from Britain's Edward, Prince of Wales to Crown Prince Leopold of Belgians. But it was to an unlikely German Prince that Mafalda was soon betrothed.

Prince Philipp Landgrave of Hesse was the third son of Prince Frederick of Hesse. Unusually for a

man of his background, he received no military education. Nevertheless, the 18-year-old dutifully enlisted in the German army two days after World War I began, signing up alongside his older brother Maximilian. He'd served first in Belgium, where Maximilian was killed, before transferring to the Eastern Front. Philipp's military career was remarkably unremarkable. Despite his noble background, he never rose above the lowly rank of lieutenant and spent much of the war working as a clerk in munitions procurement.

When war ended in November 1918, Philipp, like millions of his comrades, found himself returning to a defeated and chaotic country. Kaiser Wilhelm's abdication had created a power vacuum. The old order had collapsed and with it the economy. A fragile new republican government attempted to hold things together, but Germany was violently split and on the brink of civil war. Street battles were rife across Germany as communists battled both the Übergangsheer (the country's transitional army), which Philipp was still a part of, and the far-right nationalist militias that served alongside them. Racist, angry and hell bent on violent revenge for Germany's defeat, the toxic ideology these paramilitary groups now

THE TRUTH ABOUT MAFALDA'S DEATH

WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED AT BUCHENWALD? SEPARATING FACT FROM FICTION

Rumours abound about the true fate of Mafalda in the wake of the US air raid on Buchenwald and the injuries she sustained as a result of it. Some believe that she was deliberately murdered by SS doctors on Hitler's orders, who'd used the operation as an excuse to finally finish her off. Others, meanwhile, assert that the woman who died on the operating table in Buchenwald wasn't Princess Mafalda at all, and that the Italian princess was actually smuggled out of the camp, with her escape planned and facilitated by her husband Philipp. The most fanciful version of this story claims that she was flown to Egypt under a false identity where she later had a daughter with the country's ruler, King Farouk.

The facts we do have, however, suggest that she did indeed bleed to death at Buchenwald while having her arm amputated. The doctor who performed the operation was notorious SS physician Dr Gerhard Schiedlausky, who was tried and hanged after the war for various war crimes, including carrying out bizarre clinical trials on concentration camp inmates. Schiedlausky seems to have botched the operation. Another Italian inmate at Buchenwald, Fausto Pecorari, insists that the doctor did so deliberately, claiming that it was a common practice in the camp as a way for the Nazis to cover up the murder of political prisoners.

Whatever the truth, it's likely that the operation would have been performed without anaesthetic and that Princess Mafalda would have suffered appallingly.

After her death, her naked body was then apparently dumped along with a pile of others in the crematorium – but another prisoner, Father Joseph Thyl, pulled it out of the heap and placed it in a wooden coffin that was marked #262 and had it buried without ceremony. However, he first cut off a lock of her hair, which he smuggled out of the camp and had sent to her surviving Hessian relatives.

In 1951, her burial site was identified and coffin #262 was disinterred. Her body was then taken to Kronberg Castle in Hesse, where she was finally laid to rest after a proper funeral.

started to propagate planted a poisonous seed in the mind of the impressionable young prince.

By 1920, Philipp - now out of uniform - began leading a feckless existence. He dabbled with higher education, studying at the Technical Universität Darmstadt, but left without a degree. A brief stint working at the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum in Berlin followed, after which he drifted around Europe, nominally working as an interior designer. He partied hard, lived beyond his means and was frequently short of money. By 1922, Philipp had washed up in Rome, where he allegedly became the lover of English poet Siegfried Sassoon, while socialites Harold Nicholson and Vita Sackville-West helped further shape his political thinking.

It was in Rome that Philipp also met Mafalda in 1924 at a party thrown by Yugoslavia's Prince Paul, and the two were soon engaged. Almost immediately, their relationship attracted controversy. Not only were there all those rumours about Philipp's lifestyle, but there was also the question of religion. Mafalda was a practising Catholic while Philipp was an out-of-practice Protestant. He could have switched faiths, but to do so would have meant abandoning any inheritance of the Landgrave title (effectively a countship) back in Hesse, so he refused. Italian society was outraged, and even Pope Pius XI saw fit to put the papal boot in.

Princess Mafalda and Prince Philipp were married at Castle Racconigi in September 1925. It was one of the society weddings of the year

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THE NAZIS AND GERMAN ROYALTY

HOW REALPOLITIK RATHER THAN IDEOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES REALLY RAN HITLER'S REICH

Mafalda with Philipp at the ceremony that saw him made governor of Hesse-Nassau. Conspicuously she is the only one not doing a Nazi salute

Unlike fascism, which accommodated the monarchy (and indeed the church) within its ideological structure, National Socialism was fundamentally opposed to the idea of aristocratic privilege. As such, most leading Nazis despised the old ruling classes - but that didn't stop them making use of them.

Attracting the likes of the kaiser's son Prince Auwi to the Nazi cause helped to give the party legitimacy as it sought to take power by the ballot box rather than force. By hooking a member of the Hohenzollern family and getting them to wear the swastika armband, Hitler hoped to persuade both monarchists and more traditional conservatives to give him their vote - and it worked.

Although he'd flirted with the idea for years, Auwi didn't actually join the Nazi Party until 1 April 1930. Because of his status, however, he was given what was considered the prestigiously low membership number of 24, suggesting he was an earlier convert to the cause than he actually was. His recruitment, however, outraged his father. Nazi chief Hermann Göring had already tried winning over the former kaiser with empty promises about the restoration of the German Empire but Wilhelm had seen straight through him. Now, though, he was forced to watch on gloomily as his son actively campaigned on the party's behalf - a factor that led to him effectively disowning his fourth son.

Of course, once Auwi's usefulness had run its course, the Nazis also disowned him. After allegedly making derogatory remarks about Joseph Goebbels in private, he was denounced by the party in 1942 and was banned from making any more public appearances.

This betrayal was a fate that many aristocrats who assisted the Nazis would come to share. Mafalda's husband, Philipp of Hesse, hadn't just been useful to the Nazi cause but was useful to Hitler personally, even going so far as to buying many Italian paintings on the Führer's behalf. So star-struck was Philipp that he even considered Hitler to be one of his close friends. That, of course, changed in 1943 after the Italian surrender and Philipp's arrest. Stripped of his party membership, he was sent first to Flossenbürg concentration camp and then to Dachau, where he saw out the rest of the war.

Mafalda, second from the left, shares a stage with both Hitler and Mussolini at a military parade in Rome, May 1938

With a wedding in Rome out of the question, the venue was chosen near Turin in northwest Italy. Racconigi Castle belonged to the Carignano line of the House of Savoy, and was almost 500 miles from the Vatican. It was here, on 23 September 1925, that Mafalda married Philipp in a high-profile ceremony that attracted royalty from across Europe.

It wasn't just members of the old ruling elite who were attracted to the event, however. The wedding was also attended by Mussolini, who Philipp found as beguiling as his new bride, and was soon telling powerful friends back home in Germany that fascism was the miracle cure that Germany needed. Terrified by the growing threat communism posed to the wealthy elite, Philipp was convinced fascism would not only be able to combat it, but also restore the German monarchy, which he ultimately craved. After all, in Italy the crown enjoyed the full backing of Mussolini's black-shirted mobsters.

His marriage to Mafalda had also put Philipp in a unique position to re-establish German-Italian royal relations. Having managed to manoeuvre his way into the inner circle of the Savoy court, he now began working his Hohenzollern connections hard. His uncle, the deposed Kaiser Wilhelm, had disapproved of Philipp marrying a Catholic, so the young prince went on a charm offensive. He became such a frequent visitor to the exiled monarch in Holland that Wilhelm soon agreed to become godfather to Philipp and Mafalda's first-born child. But it was Philipp's growing friendship with the kaiser's son, Prince Auwi, that would change the course of history.

By the end of the 1920s, Mafalda and Philipp were living in the splendidly rococo Villa Polissena on the outskirts of Rome. They had two young children – Prince Moritz born in 1926 and Prince Heinrich born a year later – and should have been enjoying their lives as young parents, but Philipp had grown increasingly obsessed with German politics. In just a few years, the National Socialist Party had gone from being crank extremists to darlings of the nationalist mainstream, while the public image of its leader Adolf Hitler had been transformed from failed revolutionary to political pop idol. Prince Auwi was just one of millions who had come under Hitler's spell and he now began pressuring Philipp to join the Nazi crusade.

In 1930, Auwi introduced Hitler to Philipp. The latter was instantly smitten and in October, in Hermann Göring's Berlin apartment, he formally joined the party. However, Mafalda was not impressed. While some members of the Italian royal family had shown support for Mussolini, Mafalda wasn't one of them. Cultured and well read, the strong sense of Christian duty she had inherited from her mother was simply irreconcilable with the hate politics espoused by the extreme right. She was also openly critical of Hitler, something the Führer's ever-watchful band of cronies were all-too aware of. "Princess Mafalda," Joseph Goebbels, the Nazis' propaganda minister, noted in a diary, "is the worst bitch in the entire Italian royal house."

As a matter of political expediency though, the Nazis tolerated Mafalda. Her royal status protected her – for the time being at least – while her husband's position made him potentially invaluable to the Nazi cause. They now set out to woo him completely. In 1931 he was invited to join the SA – the Nazis' paramilitary force – donning their famous brown uniform and swastika arm band for marches in Berlin and rallies in Nuremberg. By 1937, the man who'd seen out his military career in World War I dodging combat and sitting behind a desk had been promoted – by Hitler no less – to SA General. Other privileges were also bestowed upon him including the Golden Badge, the Nazi Party's highest honour. Philipp was also lured with political office. Almost as soon as the Nazis took power, he was offered the governorship of the province of Hesse-

A memorial on the site of Buchenwald concentration camp

Nassau – not bad for someone who, just ten years earlier, had no degree and had been a struggling decorator. It was a gig that even came with its own palace, the Palais Bellevue in Kassel, which the family moved into in 1933 and where Mafalda gave birth to two more children – Prince Otto in 1938 and Princess Elisabeth in 1940.

In return for his privileged position within the Nazi state, Philipp was expected to play the role of obedient errand boy between Hitler and Mussolini. In 1938, it was his job to convince the Italian leader to stay out of Germany's intended plan to annex Austria. On the eve of the Anschluss – when German troops effectively invaded the country – Philipp flew to Rome to deliver a letter from his Führer.

The resulting meeting saw Mussolini reverse Italian policy, allowing Austria to be absorbed into the Third Reich without Italian protest. When Germany invaded Czechoslovakia a year later, it was again Philipp who dealt with Mussolini, and he also helped broker the so-called Pact of Steel in May 1939, which assured that when Hitler got the war he was spoiling for, Italy was at Germany's side.

By the summer of 1943, Hitler's war was four years old and it was not going well. After taking a beating in North Africa, German and Italian forces had fled back to Europe, chased by the Allies. When Sicily fell to them in July and the Italian mainland looked set to become the next battleground, Italy's Grand Council of Fascism voted to remove Mussolini and to restore full constitutional power to Mafalda's father, King Victor Emmanuel III. On 25 July, Il Duce was arrested on the king's orders and Italy began seeking peace terms. Hitler, outraged by Italy's betrayal, began looking for a scapegoat – and his gaze soon fell upon Mafalda.

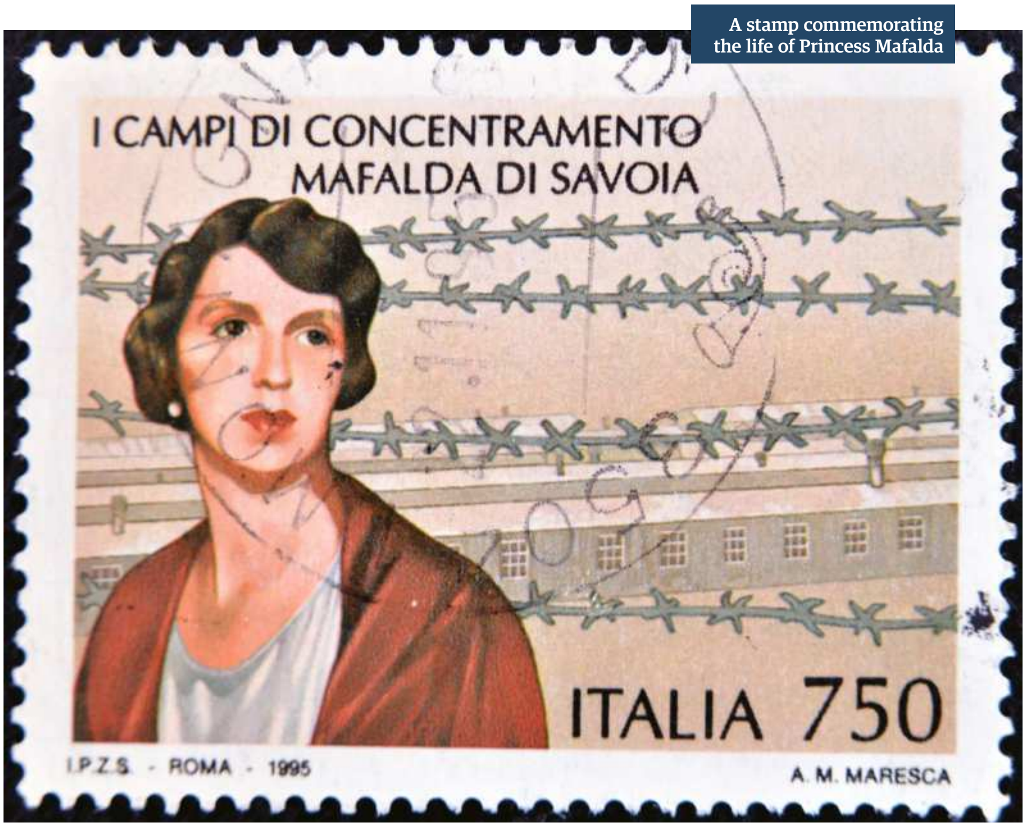
A month after Italy's capitulation, Hitler lost another of his close allies when Bulgaria's Tsar Boris III suddenly died. Although the official cause of death was heart failure, the German attaché in the Bulgarian capital of Sofia reported foul play, claiming Boris had been poisoned. When Hitler learned that Mafalda had been in Sofia around the time of Boris's death, he convinced himself that, "…the blackest carrion in the Italian royal house," as he now called her, was behind the so-called assassination. Hitler, paranoid that he too might now be next for elimination or a coup, based this wild conclusion on circumstantial evidence and rumour. No proof exists that supports the idea that she was in any way guilty. She was in Sofia, but she had arrived after Boris's death. In an act of compassion that was so typical of the princess, she had travelled across war-torn Europe at considerable risk to herself to attend Boris's funeral and comfort his widow, her younger sister Giovanna.

"HE WAS INVITED TO JOIN THE SA, DONNING THEIR BROWN UNIFORM AND SWASTIKA"

Future US president Dwight D Eisenhower views the corpses of dead prisoners at the newly liberated Buchenwald concentration camp in April 1945

News of Italy's surrender reached Mafalda while she was still in Bulgaria, at which point she learned that the Nazis had placed her husband under house arrest. On 23 September, she was called to the German Embassy in Sofia where she was told an important message from Philipp was waiting. It was a trick. She was arrested by the Gestapo and taken to Berlin for questioning. Then she was shipped off to Buchenwald concentration camp.

The US air raid on Buchenwald on 24 August 1944 killed more than 400 prisoners, but Mafalda wasn't among them. When the rescue parties began clearing the rubble, they found her seriously wounded but still alive. One side of her face had been smashed in, while her left arm was crushed and burned. She was taken to Buchenwald's on-site brothel, which doubled as an infirmary. Her arm was sutured but little effort was made to help her more. Within two days, her arm had grown gangrenous and she was taken to have it amputated. It was no place for such a major surgical procedure. As she began to bleed out on the filthy operating table, Mafalda turned to two fellow Italian prisoners and murmured, "Remember me not as a princess, but your Italian sister." They were her final words.



A stamp commemorating the life of Princess Mafalda

THE SALVATION OF NORWAY

In 1940, Norway had not been embroiled in a significant military conflict for more than a century. Then along came Hitler

WRITTEN BY JON WRIGHT

Nazi Germany always had half an eye on Norway. Its occupation would provide northerly ice-free harbours, make the transportation of iron ore a good deal easier, and disrupt numerous Allied plans. Norway was not, however, at the top of Hitler's hit list so long as it remained strictly neutral. But by 1940 the British had taken to entering Norwegian waters in pursuit of German ships: the attack on the Altmark in February 1940 was a case in point. The incident infuriated Oslo, but managed to convince Germany that Norway would soon join the Allies or that the Allies would shortly impose their own military presence on the country - the latter was, for the record, precisely what the Allies had in mind. The Germans fine-tuned and unleashed invasion plans that, until now, had resided on the strategic back boiler.

Norway was hopelessly vulnerable. Throughout the 1930s King Haakon had urged an expansion of the country's military machine but his pleas had largely gone unheeded. When German ships began to storm up Norway's fjords on 9 April they met with little resistance and secured the ports of Narvik, Trondheim, and Bergen. But then the fortifications at Oscarsborg pounded the German fleet, even sinking the flagship Blücher, and delayed the final assault on Oslo. The Germans simply seized the capital's airfield instead and strode into the city. But the few days' delay had given Haakon, Crown Prince Olav (plus wife and children), and a sizeable portion of the government, time to flee.

The royal party first stopped off at Hamar, 80 miles or so north of Oslo, and established a temporary seat of government in a local cinema. Elverum and then Nybergsund were next on the itinerary. The Germans were furious but still hoped that the king could be browbeaten into compliance. Curt Bräuer, the German Minister to Norway, arranged a meeting with Haakon. Bräuer demanded that the king put an end to

© Alamy, Getty

all resistance and appoint the Norwegian fascist politician Vidkun Quisling as prime minister, otherwise the monarch would have to abdicate. Haakon returned to Nybersgund to discuss the matter, though his position was clear. He could not agree to Quisling's appointment and wanted to fight on. He would, however, accept whatever decision the government reached and even abdicate if necessary.

Haakon's plans to resist secured unanimous support. The next day, 11 April, a major offensive was launched against Nybergsund and it was obvious that the Germans were willing to kill the unaccommodating king. The option of crossing over into Sweden was ruled out because guarantees of safety were not forthcoming. A long, arduous trek to Molde was therefore proposed. The conditions were awful, especially for a 68-year-old monarch, and the British ambassador Cecil Dormer summed up the ordeal: "His Majesty and his government were called upon to [make decisions] at a moment's notice, in a more or less complete unpreparedness and physical exhaustion." Another unusual base of operations was established - this time in Molde's Knausen Hotel - but as German bombing intensified it was deemed necessary to decamp once again.

On the night of departure (28/29 April), Molde came under heavy attack - "the whole town was an inferno," Prime Minister Nygaardsvold recalled - but HMS Glasgow was safely boarded and reached Tromsø on 1 May. A month later, 461 passengers, including the king and Prince Olav, embarked on HMS Devonshire en route to London. Neither Haakon nor Olav wanted to leave their country but accepted that they had little choice. Olav's wife and children had long since been evacuated to the United States.

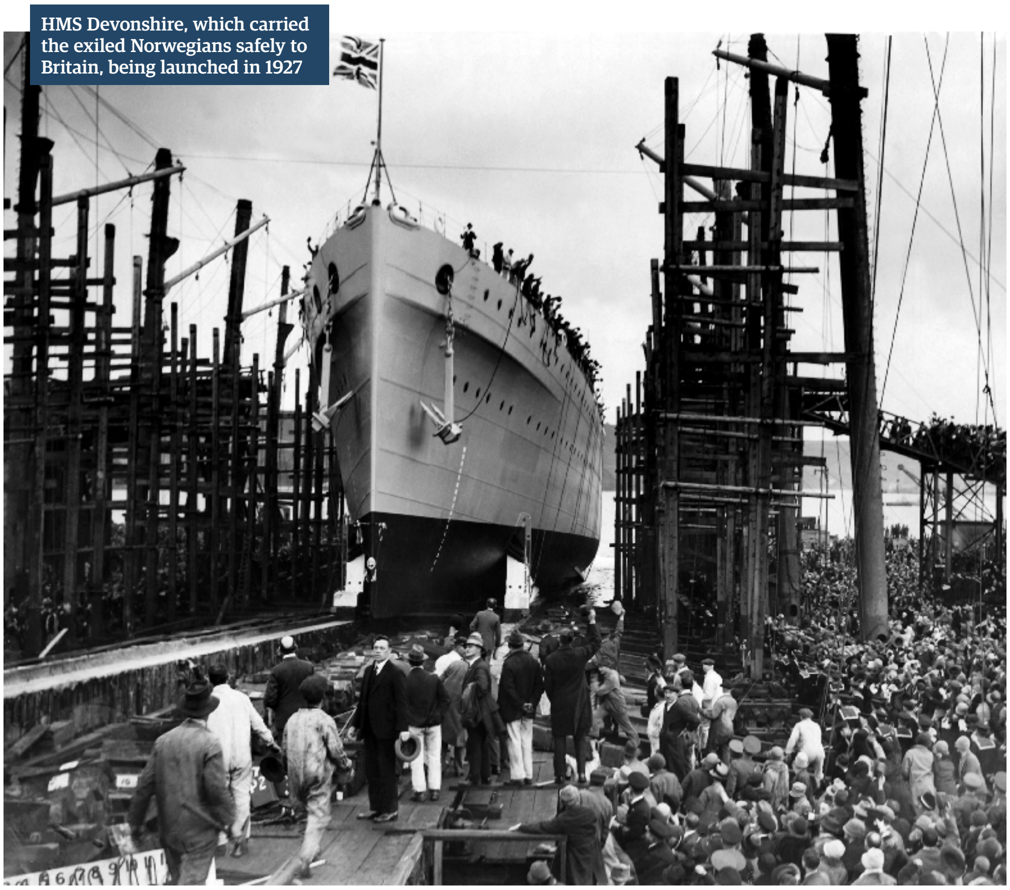
Haakon and Olav did not reach Britain in good humour; they had heard all about the Allies' feeble relief attempts. In April, the so-called central campaign had seen Allied troops stumble around unfamiliar terrain, abandon all plans to capture Trondheim, and withdraw, after a short stay, on 28 April. Slightly better results were achieved when the focus turned to the north of the country. The Allies managed to drive the Germans out of the key port of Narvik but, within a few days, they had quit the scene: the forces were needed for the increasingly difficult campaign in France. Norway, it seems, was not a priority. There was, mercifully, great solace to be found in the brave efforts of the home-grown, 40,000-strong Norwegian secret army under Otto Ruge. They were no match for Panzer divisions or machine gun battalions, but they had done much to delay the German advance.

Haakon and Olav initially stayed at Buckingham Palace, but the Blitz drove them to Bowdown House in Berkshire and, from March 1942, they set up house at Foliejon Park, close to Windsor. The day job took them to the Norwegian Legation in Kensington, quickly established as the official seat of the Norwegian government-in-exile. Here, Haakon and Olav delivered some of their morale-boosting radio broadcasts with the help of the BBC (others were beamed from Saint Olav's Norwegian Church in Rotherhithe).

These speeches were not simply a well-meaning sideshow. They were the single most potent weapon in a campaign to lift Norwegian spirits and gave the exiled royal family an extraordinary symbolic status. When the Nazis began confiscating radios, the speeches would be included in illegal papers and news-sheets. Even Haakon's simple H7 monograph took on an almost talismanic power. Norwegians crafted jewellery from coins that bore the image; it was graffitied on walls and roads and, as Arne Skouen put it in 1943, written "in chalk on children's hopscotch boards, drawn with ski poles in the snow...incised on the walls of elevators and walls." Tram seats, cafe tables, and tree trunks all became canvases of defiance. As a 70th birthday message from the home front explained, the king had "become the personal incarnation of this fight," a fact hammered home by the citizenry of Oslo mounting a coordinated campaign to wear flowers on the big day. The Germans saw this as an illegal protest, shut down the flower-shops, and arrested 900 people.

Such resistance sorely needed the image of a devoted ruler because the German regime (headed by Reichskommissar Josef Terboven, with various puppet roles assigned to Quisling) acted with brutal efficiency. But what kind of resistance was appropriate? Institutional opposition was highly effective. Norway's seven bishops resigned in February 1942, joined in April by all but 18 of the church's 1,100 pastors. The arrival of a Norwegian version of the Hitler Youth led to the resignations of more than 1,000 teachers and professors. Such recalcitrants usually ended up in Norway's series of prison camps.

But what about acts of a more violent hue, or coordinated missions organised by the Allies? Here, the exiled Norwegian royals became increasingly frustrated. They had brought a significant military force to Britain and might have expected respect in return. It was not always forthcoming. 100 Norwegian ships, including an initial contribution of 13 battleships, were placed at the disposal of the Allies during the conflict. Many pilots served in British RAF units and most helpful of all were the remains of the Norwegian Merchant Navy,


HMS Devonshire, which carried the exiled Norwegians safely to Britain, being launched in 1927

Saint Olav's Norwegian Church in Rotherhithe

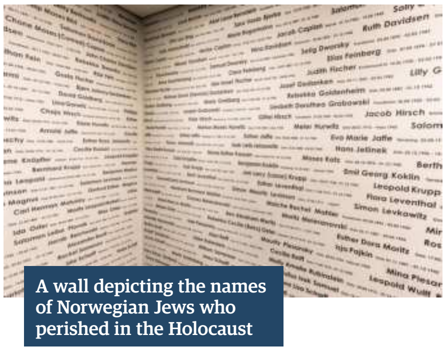
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE KIDDING, MR RIBBENTROP?

HAAKON AND OLAV DID THEIR BEST TO RAISE SPIRITS IN OCCUPIED NORWAY, BUT THIS WAS NO EASY TASK

Shortly after the invasion, Joachim von Ribbentrop, Germany's foreign minister, treated a Norwegian crowd to one of his ludicrous speeches. Hitler, he explained, was not their enemy: he "has saved an ancient and respected part of Europe" from "certain ruin and utter destruction". With saviours like that, Germany went on to strip Norway of resources, and it must have been particularly galling to watch so much food being shipped off to the self-styled Fatherland.

Norwegians had to divvy up public parks into allotments, and learn to savour the delights of ersatz coffee and cheese made from fish meal. Malnutrition sometimes reached dire levels. Not that you could find relief in your favourite newspaper (it had probably been banned) or enjoy a debate at a local meeting of your political party (unless it was the fascist Nasjonal Samling (NS) it will have been made illegal).

At least there was the radio. Well, no. Before the war, Norway annually issued 500,000 radio licences; by 1942 the figure had shrunk to 7,000, and these were only available to NS members. People in Trondheim were being shot for listening to the BBC on clandestine radios as early as 1941. And if you were Jewish, the world turned upside down. Some of the country's 2,100 Jews made it across the Swedish border, but something like 765 had suffered and then died in camps by 1945.



A wall depicting the names of Norwegian Jews who perished in the Holocaust especially the tanker fleet which was almost as large as Britain's. It served, without demur, wherever it was needed: whether in the war for the North Atlantic or during the Dunkirk evacuation. But what influence would be granted when it came to operations that took place on Norwegian seas or soil?

The Special Operations Executive (SOE) was the Allied body charged with overseeing such matters: whether in Norway or any other occupied country. Established in July 1940 it launched over 200 Norway-based missions and all but a handful of the agents involved were Norwegian. Staggeringly, however, Norway's government was kept almost entirely out of the loop until the beginning of 1942. Haakon's Military and Foreign Minister stated that he was "one step away from publicly taking a stand against British actions."

Fortunately, the Norwegians found an ally in the new deputy director of the SOE, Sir Charles Hambro. He explained that the big decisions were made higher up but this did not wash with the Norwegians: "They were in a better position than anybody else to weigh up the pros and cons of an operation." An accommodation of sorts was achieved with the establishment of an Anglo-Norwegian Collaboration Committee in February 1942. Norwegian members would be free to report back to their superiors, who would now have at least an inkling of what was going on.

There was still the question of what purpose any raids should serve. The Allies argued for a constant stream of high-profile actions that forced Germany to keep troops in Norway and softened up the enemy for a big push at some point in the future. Those in Norway (including most members of Milorg, the main resistance group) began to press for a more restrained approach and often saw little wisdom in grand, provocative gestures. If an SOE agent wanted to parachute in and improve communications, fine. But were the assassinations, the attacks on transport links or on pyrite, aluminium and titanium production particularly helpful? The resistance did play its role in many of these ventures, but it recognised that the subsequent reprisals could be dreadful.

Some of the offensives were worth the risk: the bombing of the Germans' heavy water plant at Vemork in February 1942, for instance, put a huge dent in the Reich's plans to develop nuclear weapons. At times, though, even the simplest undertakings were patently counterproductive. In April 1942, two SOE agents stopped by Telavåg. This not only exposed the presence of a resistance cell but, after two German officers were shot, led to the village's destruction. The women and elderly men were sent to internment centres, children older than six were bundled off to unhealthy educational establishments, and men under 65 were despatched to concentration camps. 334 houses were razed, boats were scuppered, and all the village's animals were killed.

Turf wars and policy debates became less heated when the prospect of victory began to emerge in 1944. In June, Haakon was more than happy to play a role in the disinformation wars - making bogus speeches, along with Wilhelmina of Holland, de Gaulle, and the Belgian prime minister, to put the Germans on the wrong track. It was also time for Olav, appointed as Norway's chief of defence in the same year, to play a more dynamic role. Make no mistake, his work during the war had been invaluable. His broadcasts were popular, particularly in North America, he had launched constructive initiatives such as Norwegian cultural exhibitions, and helped with acclimatisation programmes for British troops headed for Norway's chilly climes. His excellent military brain had been a rich resource for his father. But some of the greatest challenges would arise in the immediate post-war world.

There was still, of course, that war to win. The Russians had managed to liberate East Finnmark

Josef Terboven, the brutal and easily provoked Reichskommissar of occupied Norway

THE ABSURDITIES OF OCCUPATION

SOME OF THE OPPRESSIVE MEASURES TAKEN BY THE GERMANS WERE SO RIDICULOUS THAT HUMOUR WAS PERHAPS THE ONLY SANE RESPONSE

In May 1942, a Dr Julsrud and his two children, along with a couple of their pals, were sunbathing on the shores of the Oslofjord. A sailing boat appeared and the skipper was so clumsy that the group burst out laughing. A mistake. None other than Reichskommissar Josef Terboven was in charge of the vessel and he did not take well to being mocked. Julsrud and the children were arrested on the spot.

Such overreaction was par for the course. Was it really necessary, for example, to launch a campaign to remove suspicious members of Norway's dental profession? And what about the etiquette of rail travel? This was a crucial issue, apparently, and the posters soon appeared in the carriages: "Passengers demonstrating against uniformed members of the German Wehrmacht or members of the NS by changing their seat will be expelled from the train at the next station." No wonder that many Norwegians responded with mischief and humour.

One bookshop owner was chastised for not giving a new book about Quisling suitable prominence in his window display. The next day the display was empty, apart from three items. A copy of the Quisling tome and, at either side, a copy of a little-known potboiler novel entitled *The Man Who Everybody Wants to Murder*. Better yet was the story of a preening German officer who strides into a large Oslo store, clicks his heels, and says "Heil Hitler! Where is the hosiery department?" The elderly assistant, who has little affection for Norway's current overlords, replies: "God save our King! Three floors up." Patriotism was not easy to snuff out.

Fighting at Narvik, which resulted in a pointless Allied victory in 1940

and chase off German troops, but the latter adopted a scorched-earth policy. This made the region, now in stalemate, a freezing wasteland for many months. The Allies then put in an appearance, victory began to seem inevitable, and Haakon told his people not to indulge in a frenzy of reprisals: the Germans and their collaborators would be dealt with in civilised, legal ways. Germany was torn between surrender and making a grand last-stand in 'Fortress Norway.' It wisely chose the first option and fully capitulated on 8 May. Crown Prince Olav came home on the 13th, greeted by massive, jubilant crowds.

17 May brought the annual Constitution Day celebrations. They had been muted in recent years but, in 1945, the people laughed about Quisling languishing in a prison cell, "learning how to clean herring with a spoon handle." Children tucked into "fresh sausages for which many German hogs had given up their lives" and Olav provided the rousing speeches. The temptation, he said, would be to forget the past five years but it was important that they "be recorded in saga."

Then, on 7 June, the king finally stepped ashore. He could "never thank Britain enough," he said, "for not giving up when everything appeared darkest" but astutely lavished praise on the US and the Soviet Union, too. He could feel proud of inspiring his nation but his resolve had been every bit as impressive. Back in 1940 he had twice scoffed at the politicians back home who begged him to abdicate. He would not listen to a parliament so obviously under German duress. And, as proud as he was of the resistance, he was angered by any suggestion of a formal, alternative seat of authority in Norway. There was only one Norwegian government and, for the moment, it would hold its cabinet meetings in London.

That had all changed, now, and the legacy of occupation was not all the stuff of saga. Norway's embarrassment over levels of collaboration festered for decades, and some of its post-war policies (notably the cruel treatment of children born to German fathers) were shameful. But the nation did, and deserved to, salute its bravest moments during the occupation. At the very least the crown prince, who would shortly be off to help with the disarming of 300,000 German troops, had adopted a pragmatic approach to military affairs. "A free land," Olav announced, "requires a strong defence to protect its freedom." This was just the kind of thing Haakon had been saying back in the 1930s and hearing similar words all those years later must have made Olav's old man rather proud.

THE PRINCE, THE NAZIS AND THE BROKEN HOME

Discover how the queen's "liege man of life and limb" overcame a tragic upbringing and emerged as a war hero

WRITTEN BY TOM GARNER

Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, was one of the most recognisable men in the world. As Queen Elizabeth II's husband, he represented the British monarchy for over 70 years as the longest-serving consort of a reigning British monarch. Along with the queen, he sis much to represent the royal family as an unchanging institution in a world that had changed almost beyond recognition since Elizabeth succeeded to the throne in 1952. However, on Philip's part this security was in deep contrast to his early life, which was formed by war, neglect, tragedy and endurance. In many ways his long, successful marriage and subsequent family compensated for the trials of his youth.

Philip was born on 10 June 1921 on the Greek island of Corfu at Mons Repos, the only son of Prince Andrew of Greece and Denmark and Princess Alice of Battenberg who already had four daughters: Cecilie, Sophie, Margarita and Theodora. Although typically seen as British today, Philip was born as Prince of Greece and Denmark. To add to the confusion Philip was not a British subject at birth but did have family ties to England through his maternal grandfather, Prince Louis of Battenberg, who was a naturalised British citizen and had adopted the surname of 'Mountbatten' during World War I. Philip was related to the British royal family through Queen Victoria, but he was also sixth in line to the Greek throne and his paternal uncle, Constantine I, was the ruling king. Nevertheless, his wider European connections would soon come in very handy for Philip as he was born during a turbulent time for Greece, and his stay in the country of his birth didn't last long.

In the wake of the Greco-Turkish War (1919-1922), Philip's father was arrested as part of the 11 September 1922 Revolution. This was a revolt of the Greek armed forces against the government, who they held responsible for the Turkish victory. It led to the downfall of the Greek monarchy and the abdication of King Constantine. As the brother of Constantine and a disgraced army commander, Andrew was in deep trouble.

Princess Alice turned to her British relatives for help. King George V, who was possibly haunted by not allowing his cousin Tsar Nicholas II of Russia and his family to seek asylum in Britain during World War I, urged for a British intervention to evacuate the family. When a Greek court banished Andrew from Greece for life, he was released in December 1922 and soon afterwards a Royal Navy gunboat, HMS Calypso, evacuated the family from Corfu. Prince Philip, who was still a baby, was reputedly carried out to the ship in a makeshift cot made out of an orange box. For the infant, it was the start of decades of stateless wandering.

From the moment Philip left Corfu on 3 December 1922 until he moved into Clarence House as Princess Elizabeth's husband in the late 1940s, he had no permanent home. After several years in Paris, he was sent to boarding school in Britain. By this stage Philip's family life was already beginning to collapse. Alice, who had been born deaf, was on the verge of a nervous breakdown and was eventually placed in a Swiss sanatorium in 1931.

At around the same time, Philip's sisters all married within nine months of each other between 1930-31 and moved away to settle in Germany. Prince Andrew, who had spent more and more time away from the Parisian family home, finally left altogether and moved to the south of France with a mistress. His parents had effectively relinquished responsibility for their son. He was just ten years old and would receive no word from his mother between 1932 and 1937. When Philip was asked about this time years later his reply was stoic and pragmatic: "It's simply what happened. The family broke up. My mother was ill, my sisters were married, my father was in the south of France. I just had to get on with it. You do. One does."

In the aftermath of this disintegration, the British part of Philip's family took a large part of responsibility for his care. His maternal grandmother, Princess Victoria, sent him to live with his uncle George, Marquis of Milford Haven. He was Philip's guardian for the next seven years and became a surrogate father to the young boy.

In 1934 Philip was sent to Gordonstoun, where he flourished under the school's tough regime. He excelled at hockey and sailing and in his last year became Head Boy. But towards the end of his time at Gordonstoun, Philip was hit by a family tragedy. On 19 November 1937 his pregnant sister Cecilie was killed in plane crash in Belgium, along with her husband, two children and unborn child. She had been flying to England to attend a wedding. Philip travelled alone to attend the funerals in Germany. It was a tragically strange occasion. Nazi officials surrounded the funeral parties but it was also the first time that Philip's parents had seen each other and their surviving children for years. They were the worst circumstances for a reunion, but Philip returned to Britain to fend for himself again.

The next year, 1938, brought new purpose to Philip's life in more ways than one. Under the advice of his father and Lord Mountbatten, Philip decided to join the Royal Navy and enrolled at the Britannia Royal Naval College at Dartmouth. He excelled at naval training and passed with almost top marks. His contemporary, Terence Lewin, who later became First Sea Lord said, "Prince Philip was a highly talented seaman. No doubt about it. If he hadn't become what he did, he would have been First Sea Lord and not me."

This was an intense time to join the Navy as Britain was on the brink of war with Germany, but Philip's time at Dartmouth coincided with the first meeting of his future wife. In July 1939, Philip was put in charge of entertaining his distant cousins, 13-year-old Princess Elizabeth and her younger sister Margaret when they visited the college. They had met in 1934 and in 1937 at George VI's coronation, but on this occasion Elizabeth fell for Philip. Over the next few years they would write letters to each other, but for the moment there were other priorities. There was a war to be fought.

Philip's war service began when he was posted to HMS Ramillies in Ceylon in January 1940. In the war's early days, he was posted far from action as Greece was not at war, and as a Greek prince the British did not want him to be killed on a Royal Navy ship. However, this changed when Italy invaded Greece and Philip became an active participant. At the Battle of Cape Matapan off the Greek coast in March 1941, Philip served as a midshipman on HMS Valiant where he was in charge of operating the ship's searchlight to pick out ships during the night. He recalled, "I reported that I had a target in sight and was ordered to 'open shutter'. The beam lit up a stationary cruiser and at this point all hell broke loose, as all our

Philip works in his office upon returning from service

During World War II, Philip was first officer on board HMS Whelp

eight 15-inch guns, plus those of the flagship, plus HMS Barham's, started firing at the stationary cruiser, which disappeared in an explosion and a cloud of smoke. I was then ordered to 'train left' and lit up another Italian cruiser, which was given the same treatment". The ships identified by Philip were two of five Italian warships that were sunk by the British with the loss of 2,300 sailors. It was Italy's greatest naval defeat and Philip was mentioned in dispatches for his courage and awarded the Greek Cross of Valour.

The next year, at the age of 21, Philip was promoted to become one of the youngest first lieutenants in the Navy and in July 1943 he was once again in action, this time aboard HMS Wallace taking part in the Allied invasion of Sicily. During a night attack, Wallace came under bombardment from a German plane. One yeoman sailor aboard the ship, Harry Hargreaves, recalled in a 2003 interview, "It was obvious that we were a target and they would not stop until we had suffered a fatal hit. It was like being blindfolded and trying to evade an enemy whose only problem was getting his aim right. There was no doubt in anyone's mind that a direct hit was inevitable." During a lull in the attack Philip acted quickly. "The first lieutenant (Philip) went into hurried conversation with the captain, and the next thing a wooden raft was being put together on deck." This raft was attached with smoke floats that created the illusion of debris ablaze on the water. The German plane was fooled into attacking the raft and the ship slipped away under the cover of darkness. Hargreaves praised Philip's initiative, "It had been marvellously quick thinking. Prince Philip saved our lives that night. I suppose there would have been a few survivors, but certainly the ship would have been sunk. He was always very courageous and resourceful." Philip himself later talked about his plan in a BBC interview, describing it as "a frightfully good wheeze… we got away with it." Despite his nonchalance, even he conceded, "It was a very unpleasant sensation."

Philip ended his war aboard HMS Whelp, which was one of the ships that took part in the formal surrender of Japanese forces on 2 September 1945. He recalled, "Being in Tokyo Bay with the surrender ceremony taking place in the battle ship, which was what, 200 yards away and you could see what was going on with a pair of binoculars, it was a great relief". After the surrender his ship took on former prisoners of war and he was shocked by their appearance. "These people were naval people. They were emaciated… tears pouring down their cheeks, they just drank their tea, they couldn't really speak. It was a most extraordinary sensation."

Now that the war was over he expected to continue in his naval career, but fate had determined a different future for him.

THE SISTERS WHO MARRIED NAZIS

SOME OF PHILIP'S SIBLINGS HAD SINISTER CONNECTIONS TO THE THIRD REICH

One sign of Philip's highly divided family was that some of his sisters had connections to the Nazi Party. All four had married into the German nobility: Margarita had married Gottfried, Prince of Hohenlohe-Langenburg; Theodora married Berthold, Margrave of Baden; Cecilie married Georg Donatus, Grand Duke of Hesse and Sophie married Prince Christoph of Hesse. It was traditional for European royal families to marry into foreign noble houses, but in the context of the 1930s, it was an out-of-date practice, particularly in the wake of World War I. Many surviving nobles tried to protect their positions by aligning with the radical social changes that were occurring throughout Europe. In the case of Germany, some sought to curry favour with the Nazis.

Sophie's husband Prince Christoph and his brother Philipp were great-grandsons of Queen Victoria and enthusiastic Nazis. Christoph was a prominent SS colonel who was attached to Himmler's personal staff and was the head of the intelligence service, the 'Forschungsamt', which spied on Nazi opponents under the command of Hermann Goering. Philipp was their governor in Hesse, and later served as a liaison between Hitler and Mussolini. Sophie and Christoph even named their eldest son Karl Adolf in Hitler's honour and Sophie said that Hitler was a "charming and seemingly modest man."

On 1 May 1937 Cecilie and her husband Georg, Duke of Hesse, also joined the Nazi Party, but they were killed in a plane crash. Their funerals became a Nazi pageant. Prince Philip walked alongside Prince Christoph who wore his SS uniform, and Philipp wore the brown shirt of the SA. There were also uniformed soldiers, and many onlookers gave the Hitler salute. Goering attended and there were messages of condolences from Hitler and Goebbels. When Prince Philip got married ten years later the British royal family excluded his surviving sisters and their husbands from attending the wedding, largely out of embarrassment and taking into consideration the anti-German feeling in Britain when the horrors of the Nazi regime had been realised.

Prince Philipp of Hesse was a member of the Nazi Party and the brother-in-law of Princess Sophie, Philip's sister

THE KING WHO STOOD UP TO HITLER

Christian X of Denmark led his people in peaceful opposition to Nazi occupation

WRITTEN BY EDOARDO ALBERT

The old man, straight-backed and formal, rode a horse along the streets of Copenhagen. As he went, people waved or saluted and he acknowledged their greetings. The man rode alone, without a guard or escort, despite it being wartime. He was Christian X, king of an occupied land, Denmark, and the horse was named Jubilee. Since the German occupation on 9 April 1940, Christian had taken a daily ride in the capital whenever he was staying in the Amalienborg Palace, unaccompanied by any attendants or guards. During that time he had become a symbol of Danish resistance. It was a far cry from 20 years ago, when Christian's stubborn adherence to his idea of the royal prerogative had almost brought an end to the Danish monarchy in the Easter Crisis of 1920.

But it was all of a piece for this most upright of monarchs. And it was Christian's rectitude that played a large part in what came to be called the Danish Miracle, the spiriting away to neutral Sweden of almost all of the country's Jews when the Nazis attempted to have them transported to Germany for extermination.

Christian was born on 26 September 1870, son to Frederick, who at Christian's birth was crown prince to the throne. The young Christian was the first member of the Danish royal family to pass the high school certificate, but he thereafter followed the usual military career expected of heirs to the throne, serving in the Royal Life Guard for 22 years - the Danish version has a dress uniform very similar to the British Guards regiments, complete with red tunic and bearskin hat. While Christian was pursuing his military career, his father was waiting. Frederick had to wait a long time, 43 years, in fact, until he finally ascended to the throne on 29 January 1906, but he would only rule for six more years.

Troubled by ill health, Frederick went south to Nice to enjoy its mild climate for the winter. But returning to Denmark in May 1912, he stopped

©Getty

in Hamburg, Germany, on 13 May, staying at the Hamburger Hof Hotel under a pseudonym, Count Kronsborg. The next evening the elderly gentleman left the hotel alone for a stroll. In the morning, his valet realised that the king hadn't returned to his room. Inquiries revealed that the police had found the body of an unknown but well-dressed older man on a park bench and had taken it to the city morgue. It was King Frederick - he had died from a heart attack.

Now a monarch, Christian had inherited much of his grandfather's stern spirit, rather than the more liberal style of his father. Christian was part of the Danish government's decision to remain neutral throughout World War I, although this was a neutrality that the country had to struggle to maintain - since it shared its southern border with Germany - and there remained open questions about the status of different parts of the Jutland Peninsula.

At the end of the war, Denmark took part in the negotiations, despite not having played a part in the conflict, in order to settle the question of Jutland and its mix of Danish and German populations. The Treaty of Versailles determined that there would be two plebiscites, in northern and southern Schleswig, to decide whether these areas should reunite with Denmark or remain part of Germany.

The northern plebiscite voted decisively to become part of Denmark, the southern just as decisively to remain German. However, Danish nationalists argued that the town of Flensburg, the most populous town in central Jutland, should become part of Denmark because it had a large Danish population, and to ensure the weakening of Germany. Christian agreed with the nationalist sentiment and dismissed the Danish government when it refused to carry out his wishes, installing a caretaker administration. The atmosphere in Denmark became febrile, teetering on the brink of open revolt until Christian negotiated an agreement with the Social Democrats, dismissed his administration and agreed on a new interim cabinet that would set the timetable for new elections to be held.

For his part, Christian made peace with his new role as constitutional monarch, and accepting that he was now a symbol of national unity rather than an active political player, he enacted that unity by riding over the border of Denmark on a white horse to reunite the country with the province of northern Schleswig that had voted to rejoin Denmark.

Settling into his new position, Christian made it his practice to take a daily ride through the streets of Copenhagen whenever he was staying in the city, unaccompanied by either guards or groom. He thus became a very visible symbol of the nation.

But on 9 April 1940, Christian was woken by the news that the Germans were invading, pouring over the land border that separated Hitler's regime from its northern neighbour. While Denmark itself held little strategic importance to the Germans, it was a necessary stepping stone for their planned invasion of Norway.

Of all the campaigns of World War II, it was the shortest and least bloody, lasting from 4.15am until the Danish government capitulated at 8.34am later that same day. About 25 Danes were killed resisting the invasion, and a handful of Germans. Knowing full well that its flat land provided no natural obstacles to the German panzer divisions, the Danish government had striven to avoid war with its powerful neighbour. In the few frantic hours of debate, all but the commander of the defence forces advised King Christian that a quick surrender would be better for the country - as indeed it proved to be. Having suffered such light casualties, Hitler was content to allow the Aryan Danes to continue to govern themselves in domestic matters

Nine kings attended the funeral of King Edward VII in 1910; Christian's father, Frederick VIII, is seated on the far right

© wiki. Scanned from the book "Crown & Camera". Published by Penguin Books

while allowing the German fleet, army and Luftwaffe to make use of bases on the peninsula.

Unlike fellow European monarchs and heads of state whose countries had fallen to Nazi aggression, Christian decided not to go into exile, but to stay in Denmark alongside his fellow Danes. As such, his regular rides through the streets of Copenhagen, still undertaken without a guard, became first a sign of normalcy in extraordinary times, and then a silent symbol of defiance in the face of occupation. As a sign of their support for the king and the slowly growing Danish resistance movement, people took to wearing a square button with the Danish crown and the king's insignia, the Kongemærket, or King's Emblem pin. At the time of the German invasion, Christian was 69. He continued with his daily rides on Jubilee for two years until a fall from his horse on 19 October 1942 injured him badly.

However, Christian had already ruffled Hitler's feathers by this time. As a mark of his approbation, Hitler had sent Christian a long personal letter on his 72nd birthday in September 1942, congratulating him on his reign. By way of reply, Christian had sent a seven-word telegram: "Spreche Meinen besten Dank aus. Chr. Rex" – "Giving my best thanks, King Christian." Hitler

Still crown prince, Christian married Princess Alexandrine in 1898, and they had two sons. They are pictured here with their eldest, Frederick

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“ON 9 APRIL 1940, CHRISTIAN WAS WOKEN BY THE NEWS THE GERMANS WERE INVADING”

King Christian visiting his southern neighbour, Kaiser Wilhelm II, in 1913

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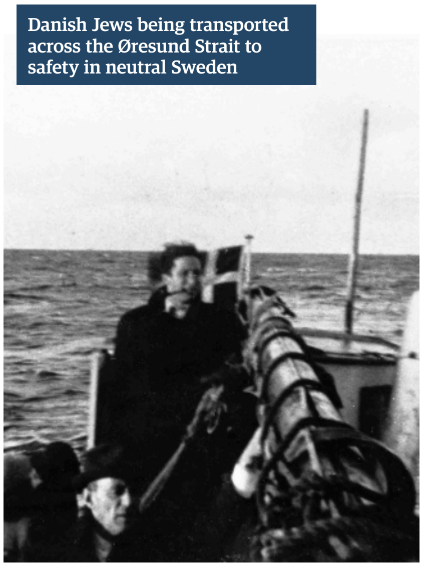
ELSINORE SEWING CLUB

THE GROUP THAT HELPED THE JEWS ESCAPE

In late 1943, Danish journalist Børge Rønne heard of a distraught Jewish man found near the coast. Unable to find means of escape, his family had decided to take cyanide rather than be taken by the Gestapo, but he had been unable to swallow the capsule. The Danish police later found him. The news galvanised Rønne and a group of three other men: bookbinder Erling Kiær, detective Thormod Larsen and Ove Bruhn, a police clerk. Together they formed the Elsinore Sewing Club, dedicated to getting Denmark's Jews across the Øresund Sound to safety in neutral Sweden.

The Elsinore Sewing Club saved ten per cent of the Jews who escaped. Kiær personally took many of the refugees across the strait, while other members of the Sewing Club – they had taken the name to put off the Gestapo – worked with the Swedes to ensure the refugees would be accepted. However, Kiær was eventually betrayed by informers and transported himself to a concentration camp. Kiær survived the war, but in its aftermath the club was in no mood to forgive the informers: both were killed, one strangled and thrown from a boat and the other shot in his home.


Danish Jews being transported across the Øresund Strait to safety in neutral Sweden

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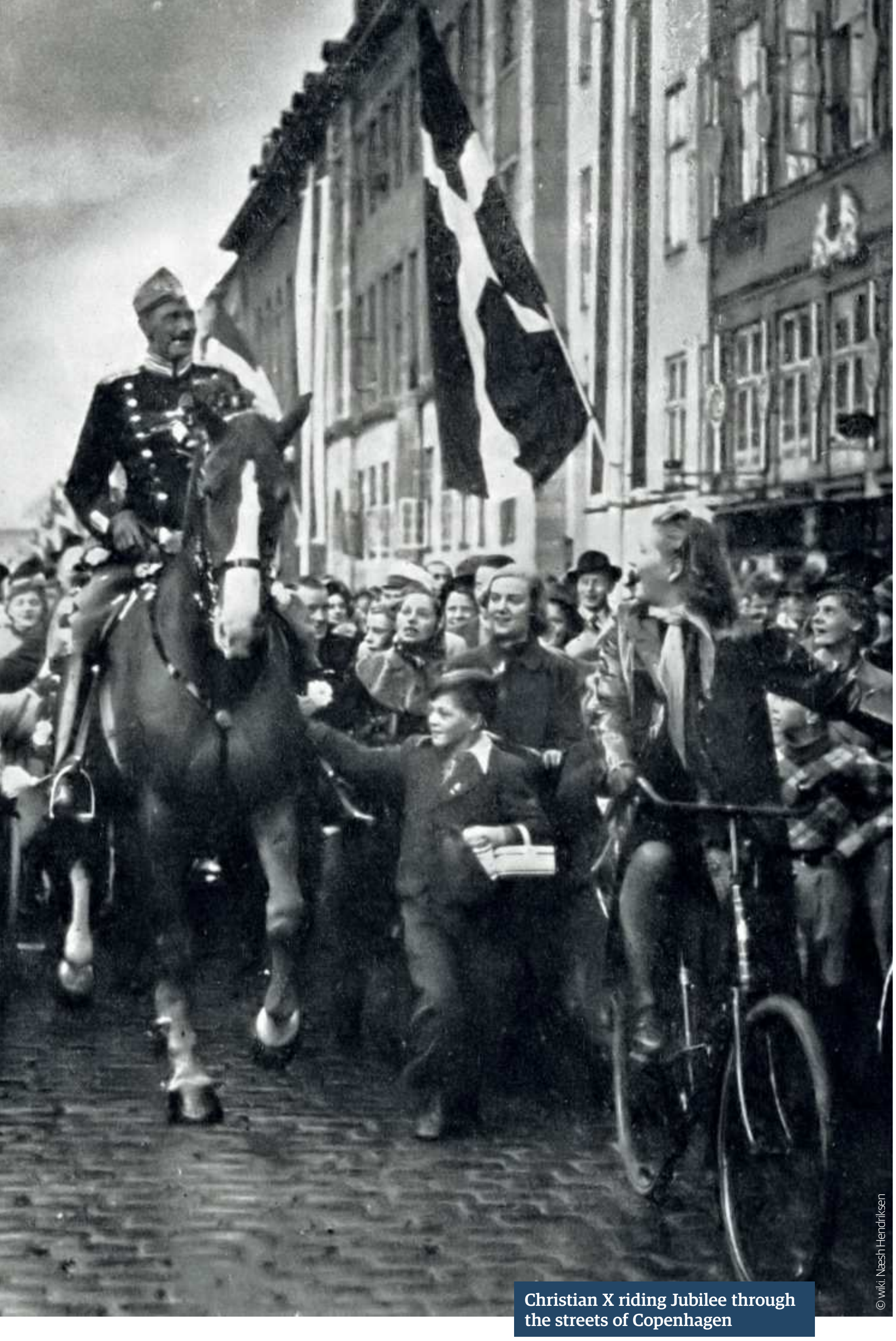

Christian X riding Jubilee through the streets of Copenhagen

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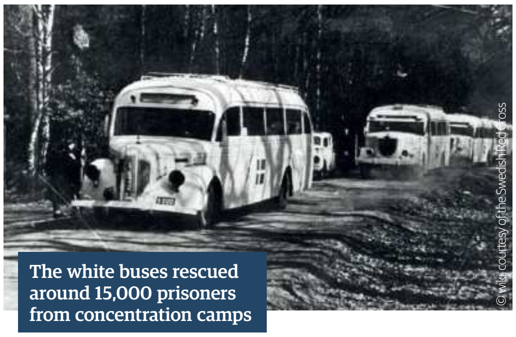
THE WHITE BUSES

THE SWEDISH CONVOY THROUGH WAR-TORN GERMANY THAT RESCUED THOUSANDS FROM CONCENTRATION CAMPS

It was Himmler who gave permission. Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler, head of the SS, said yes to columns of Swedish buses driving through Germany to collect and take back to Sweden thousands of concentration camp inmates.

Of course, it was not through any belated sorrow for what the SS had done in those camps that Himmler gave permission, but because in the fevered atmosphere of the early months of 1945 he was still hoping to do a deal with Britain and America. The man he was negotiating with, Swedish diplomat Count Folke Bernadotte, knew perfectly well that there was no chance of such a deal, but if conveying the plan to the Allies was the price of allowing him to organise the rescue mission, then he was perfectly willing to pay it.

Sure enough, the Allies did not agree to Himmler's proposal, but Count Bernadotte was still able to lead columns of painted, white buses deep into Germany to rescue prisoners from the concentration camps. While first meant for Scandinavian prisoners, the mission soon widened, and in the end some 15,000 prisoners were rescued, including the surviving Danish Jews in Theresienstadt concentration camp.



The white buses rescued around 15,000 prisoners from concentration camps

© wiki. courtesy of the Swedish Red Cross

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Danish troops before the German invasion; two of these young men were killed in action later that same day

was outraged. In revenge he recalled the German ambassador from Denmark and expelled the Danish ambassador from Germany. The German government also forced the Danish government to resign, with the new government led by the diplomat Erik Scavenius, who had dealt with the Germans before the war and whom they expected to be more accommodating.

The background to what became the 'Telegram Crisis' was the slowly increasing work of the Danish resistance and the wider background of a war that was turning against Germany. With King Christian's fall leaving him sidelined as he struggled through a long recovery, the Nazi regime began to make plans for the removal of Danish Jews.

In 1943, with the war swinging even more against Germany, the Danish resistance increased its activities, while nationwide strikes also hampered the German occupation. When on 28 August the Germans demanded that the Danish government ban all strikes and make acts of sabotage punishable by death, the government decided to resign rather than implement such measures. The Germans then began to rule Denmark directly, and the new administration decided to move directly against the roughly 7,800 Jews living in the country. Up until then, Danish Jews – seen as subjects of the king alongside every other Dane – had been protected by Danish law.

One of the Germans given the task of assembling Danish Jews for deportation was the diplomat Georg Ferdinand Duckwitz. But learning of the plans from the Gestapo, Duckwitz leaked the news to Hans Hedtoft, head of the Danish Social Democrats, having already flown to Sweden to ask if they would be willing to receive Danish Jewish refugees. Hedtoft passed on the plans to the Jewish community. On 29 September 1943, the day before Rosh Hashanah, chief rabbi Marcus Melchior urged his people to go into hiding. Meanwhile, Danish civil servants, learning independently of German plans, also found ways of getting word to their Jewish compatriots before the rounding up could begin.

In Sweden, the government officially announced on 2 October that it would accept Danish Jewish refugees. The task then was to smuggle Danish Jews out of the country before the Gestapo could find them. In response, groups sprang up to smuggle the Jews out of Denmark, including the Helsingør Syklub, or Elsinore Sewing Club. These small-scale operations – employing fishing boats, rowing boats and sometimes even kayaks – in the end managed to smuggle almost all of Denmark's Jews across the Øresund Sound into Sweden.

Of the 7,800 Jews in Denmark, the Gestapo managed to round up only 464 for transportation, these Danish Jews being sent to Theresienstadt concentration camp. However, the Danes did not abandon the transported Danish Jews, maintaining pressure through the Danish Red Cross so that the condition of the Danish Jews at the concentration camp was monitored, as well as them being allowed to receive food and medical parcels from Denmark. As a result of this pressure, none of the Danish Jews at Theresienstadt were sent to extermination camps. In total, 51 Danish Jews died at Theresienstadt from disease. The other 425 – there were some additions through babies being born in captivity – survived the war.

With the war drawing to its close in 1945, the Danish Jews in Theresienstadt were released into the keeping of the Swedish diplomat Count Folke Bernadotte, who arranged for their transportation to Sweden aboard buses specially painted white and with the Red Cross to prevent them being attacked as military vehicles. Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center, states that 102 Danish Jews died in the Shoah, among the lowest proportions for any occupied country.

As for King Christian, his fall from his faithful horse Jubilee had left him an invalid, although he continued to help with financing the transportation of Danish Jews to Sweden. Although Christian was also King of Iceland, the war meant that he was unable to carry out his constitutional duties there, and in 1944 the Icelanders voted that under the circumstances the country should become a republic. Christian accepted the verdict, but retained the title of King of Iceland until he died.

Christian X died on 20 April 1947 in Amalienborg, his palace in Copenhagen. King through two world wars, he had reigned for nearly 35 years. His body was interred in Roskilde Cathedral. At his funeral, the armband of the Danish resistance was placed upon his coffin.

THE PRINCESS AND THE PRESIDENT

As the fires of World War II ripped Crown Princess Märtha of Norway from her nation, she found comfort in the presence of President Roosevelt

WRITTEN BY JESSICA LEGGETT

She was the beautiful princess whose commitment and love for her adopted country, Norway, has led to her being fondly remembered as the 'Mother of the Nation'. He was the charismatic president who guided the United States through the terrors of World War II and is considered to be one of the greatest political leaders to have ever lived. This is the story of Crown Princess Märtha and President Franklin D Roosevelt, two remarkable people who sought comfort in each other during a time of complete darkness and turmoil while giving their fellow countrymen the hope that they desperately needed.

Märtha and Franklin first met in spring 1939, when she visited the United States with her husband, Crown Prince Olav. The royal couple had been married ten years and they had three children together. Born a princess of Sweden, Märtha's marriage to Norway's crown prince helped to promote relations between the two countries, which had been tense since the previous unity of their crowns was dissolved in 1905. There was genuine love, affection and devotion between the royal couple and they enjoyed a happy life together. But this didn't stop the president from developing an attraction to Märtha the second he laid eyes on her.

Unlike the princess, Franklin was no stranger to infidelity. He had been married to his wife Eleanor since 1905 and they had six children, although they had lost one son shortly after he was born. Franklin had a number of affairs over the years, most notably with his wife's social secretary, Lucy Mercer. Eleanor knew of these liaisons and even offered to divorce her husband, but the president's advisors warned him against it because it could have ruined his reputation. Although they persevered with their marriage, it was clear that Franklin and Eleanor were now together for appearances rather than love.

Meanwhile, the peaceful life that Märtha and Olav had built together with their family was shattered in April 1940. The Nazis invaded Norway and, despite the royal family's attempts to resist them, it finally became clear that they

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Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt are pictured here with their five children in 1919. Their physical relationship ceased some time after the birth of their last child in 1916

needed to flee the country. Olav and his father, King Haakon VII, went to London where they formed a Norwegian government in exile, determined to find a way to defeat the enemy. As for Crown Princess Märtha, she fled to her native Sweden with her children - but there was no warm welcome from her homeland. As popular as she was, her presence threatened the neutrality that Sweden wanted to maintain during the war and, as a result, Märtha and her children made the people feel uncomfortable.

Franklin swooped in to solve the issue, inviting the princess and her children to seek asylum in the United States. Märtha gratefully accepted and the president immediately sent the ship USS American Legion to escort the family to their new home. When she arrived on American soil, the president's infatuation was evident to see and Märtha's subsequent stays in Franklin's private estate at Hyde Park, New York, and the White House only served to cement the pair's blossoming relationship.

The princess and the president began to spend time together almost every day, usually at lunch or dinner, and Märtha was soon joining him on his long, relaxing afternoon drives. This particularly upset another of Franklin's rumoured lovers, Marguerite 'Missy' LeHand. His private secretary and companion for over 20 years, Missy was extremely distressed that the princess had taken her seat in the president's car and feared that Märtha would replace her in his life as well. Eleanor, too, was becoming frustrated with the open displays of affection between the two, feeling slighted by their behaviour. After all, this wasn't just another secretary, but an elegant princess who had completely bowled the president over. They were very flirtatious with one another and Franklin would often use the nickname 'Godchild' for his close friend, to which she would playfully respond, calling him her 'dear Godfather'. Soon it was painfully obvious that Märtha needed to find another residence if she wanted to avoid a scandal.

The princess managed to find an estate in Bethesda, Maryland, just outside of Washington, DC, and relocated there. Nevertheless, there was not enough distance between her and Franklin as the move did not prevent her from visiting the White House on a regular basis. To avoid the wrath of his wife, Märtha even scheduled her visits for when she knew the first lady was away on business, which made the relationship even more suspicious. On his part, Franklin would make frequent trips to see Märtha in her new home so often that his staff began to refer to the princess as "the president's girlfriend". Their actions quickly helped to fan the flames of wartime gossip and salacious rumours began to spread.

Nonetheless, there is no existing evidence to validate claims that Märtha and Franklin were engaged in an illicit affair - in fact, the president was permanently paralysed from the waist down after he contracted polio in 1921. Although he carefully controlled his image and how much the public saw of his disability, he was wheelchair-bound and often relied on close aides or his children to help him stand. As a result, it is unlikely that there was a physical relationship, particularly as there is no proof and nobody caught them in the act. However, they were known to embrace each other frequently and observers at the White House noted that "the president kissed Princess Märtha at every opportunity."

If anything, their relationship was on a much more diplomatic level. The princess made the best of her situation and continued to champion the rights of the Norwegian people from her exile

Crown Prince Olav, Crown Princess Märtha and their children return home after the liberation of Norway

to widespread admiration across the world. But despite her efforts to remind her subjects that they were not alone, Märtha was incredibly isolated in America. She barely saw her husband throughout the war as he remained in exile in London - the only comforts that the princess had to remind her of home were her children and two of her maids who had travelled with them across the pond. For Märtha, her relationship with the president helped to numb the solitude she felt being so far away from her beloved home.

As for Franklin, he too craved friendly companionship. One of his closest advisors, Harry Hopkins, had stayed by his side throughout the beginning of the war, even moving into the White House itself. Yet he eventually fell in love with a young woman named Louise, and after their marriage Harry moved out, putting both a physical and emotional distance between the two friends. By now the president was almost in his sixties and he barely saw Eleanor, who had set up her own residence at Val-Kill and was committed to her own charitable causes. Märtha was Franklin's junior by almost 20 years and her youthful, bright and vivacious personality lifted his spirits. For the president, Märtha was a breath of fresh air.

THE KING WHO RULED WITHOUT HIS QUEEN

KING OLAV V ALWAYS REMAINED DEVOTED TO HIS WIFE, EVEN AFTER HER EARLY DEATH

Crown Prince Olav of Norway and Princess Märtha of Sweden, who were also first cousins, were secretly engaged in 1928 during the summer Olympics in Amsterdam, where Olav won a gold medal in sailing. Announcing their betrothal in January 1929, to the delight of their respective countries, they married two months later on 21 March. Children soon followed, with the birth of Princess Ragnhild in 1930, Princess Astrid in 1932 and Prince Harald in 1937.

Olav and Märtha were separated for the majority of World War II. They loved one another deeply and the period apart, after 15 years together, was difficult for them. It brought an end to the idyllic life they had built with their family at their Skaugum estate near Oslo. As hard as this sudden disruption was, the royal couple were both determined to defeat the Nazis so that they could be safely reunited. Despite rumours of Märtha and Franklin's affair, there is no evidence that it concerned the crown prince, who managed to visit them in the United States briefly during the war.

After the war ended, Olav quickly returned to Norway to stabilise the country, awaiting the return of his father, King Haakon VII. Five years after they had fled their homeland, the king, Märtha and her children arrived back on Norwegian soil in June 1945. As symbols of the Norwegian resistance, Olav and Märtha were welcomed with joyous celebration and they, of course, were finally reunited.

Unfortunately their happiness was short-lived as the crown princess was clearly ill, suffering with cancer. Although she persevered with her duties, her health continued to decline for a number of years. In 1954, it was Olav and Märtha's silver wedding anniversary and plans were made for a celebration. Then, just one week before, the crown princess suddenly collapsed. She spent her anniversary in hospital, while Olav dedicated a heartfelt speech to his wife and spoke of his devotion to her at a private family dinner.

Märtha passed away two weeks later, leaving behind her heartbroken husband. She died three years before Olav became king and so she was never crowned queen of Norway. Olav never forgot his wife and never remarried. In place of a queen, their three children supported their father in his duties, as their mother would have done. King Olav lived for another 47 years, passing away in 1991 from a heart attack at the age of 87. They are buried together in the Royal Mausoleum at Akershus Fortress in Oslo, finally together and at peace.

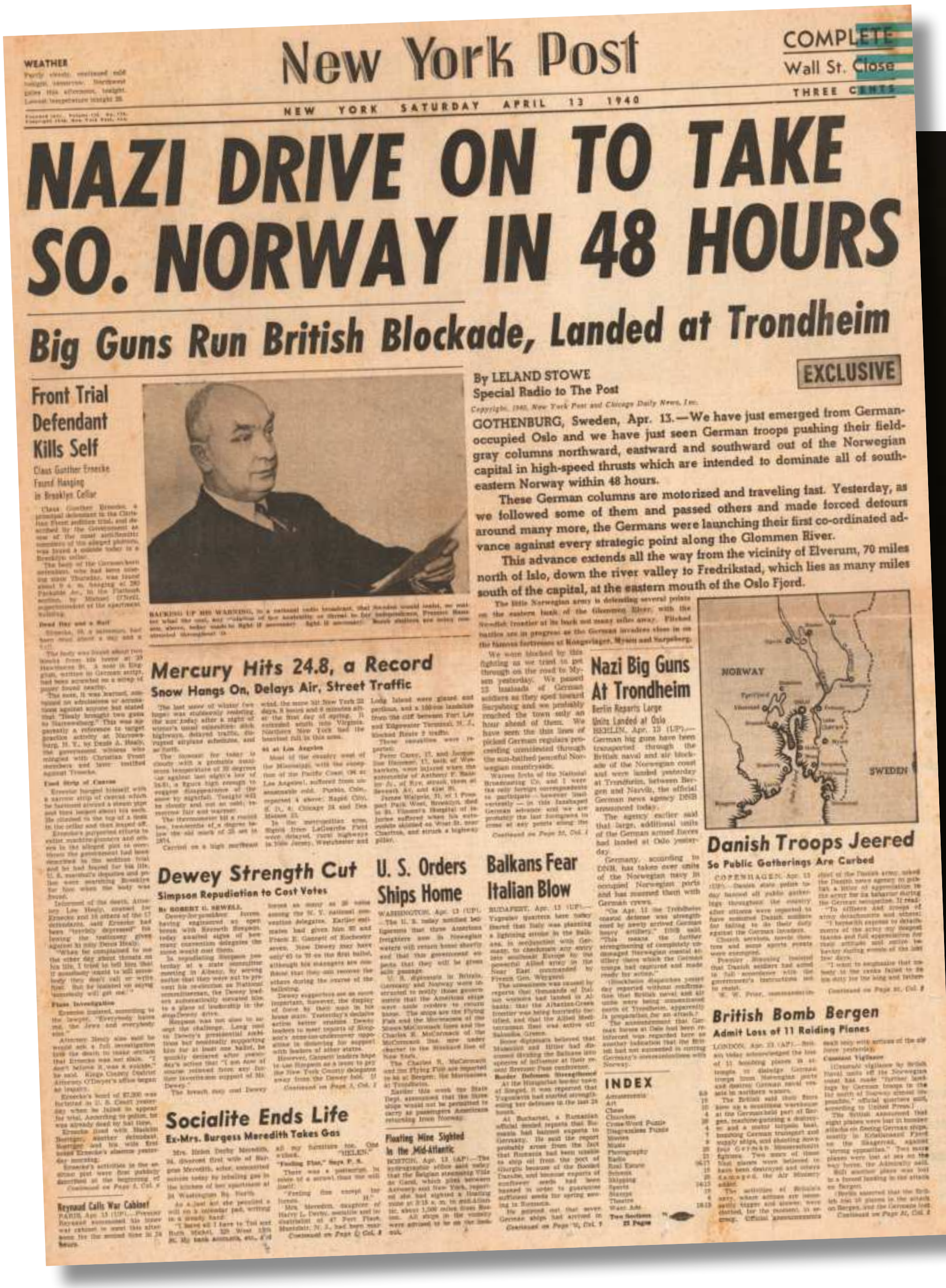
Crown Prince Olav and Crown Princess Märtha's marriage was a love match and they were very happy together

Crown Prince Olav and Crown Princess Martha visited the Roosevelts in 1939, where the princess and the president first struck up a friendship

The princess and the president during her exile, with King George II of Greece at Hyde Park, New York, on 27 June 1942

The special relationship between the two was clearly the inspiration for his famous 'Look To Norway' speech that he gave in 1942 at the height of their alleged affair. Gifting the Norwegian Navy with a new escort ship, HNoMS King Haakon VII, the president commemorated the occasion with these words: "If there is anyone who still wonders why this war is being fought, let him look to Norway. If there is anyone who has any delusions that this war could have been averted, let him look to Norway; and if there is anyone who doubts the democratic will to win, again I say, let him look to Norway." These words not only comforted the Norwegians who were being suppressed under Nazi occupation, but also gave way to how much Franklin admired the country's strength and spirit, which Märtha certainly exhibited herself.

There is little doubt that the love shared between Märtha and Franklin helped to cultivate a unique rapport between the United States and Norway. The princess replied with an address that was just as adoring. She thanked Franklin for his "beautiful and generous words" that would "ultimately find their way to every Norwegian home." Their relationship also did a lot to improve Norway's reputation across



New York Post

COMPLETE
Wall St. Close
THREE CENTS

WEATHER

NEW YORK SATURDAY APRIL 13 1940

NAZI DRIVE ON TO TAKE SO. NORWAY IN 48 HOURS

Big Guns Run British Blockade, Landed at Trondheim

EXCLUSIVE

By LELAND STOWE
Special Radio to The Post

GOTHENBURG, Sweden, Apr. 13.—We have just emerged from German-occupied Oslo and we have just seen German troops pushing their field-gray columns northward, eastward and southward out of the Norwegian capital in high-speed thrusts which are intended to dominate all of southeastern Norway within 48 hours.

These German columns are motorized and traveling fast. Yesterday, as we followed some of them and passed others and made forced detours around many more, the Germans were launching their first co-ordinated advance against every strategic point along the Glommen River.

This advance extends all the way from the vicinity of Elverum, 70 miles north of Islo, down the river valley to Fredrikstad, which lies as many miles south of the capital, at the eastern mouth of the Oslo Fjord.

Front Trial Defendant Kills Self

Claus Gunther Ernecke Found Hanging in Brooklyn Cellar

Mercury Hits 24.8, a Record

Snow Hangs On, Delays Air, Street Traffic

Nazi Big Guns At Trondheim

Berlin Reports Large Units Landed at Oslo

NORWAY

SWEDEN

Dewey Strength Cut

Simpson Repudiation to Cost Votes

U. S. Orders Ships Home

Balkans Fear Italian Blow

Danish Troops Jeered

So Public Gatherings Are Curbed

British Bomb Bergen

Admit Loss of 11 Raiding Planes

Socialite Ends Life

Ex-Mrs. Burgess Meredith Takes Gas

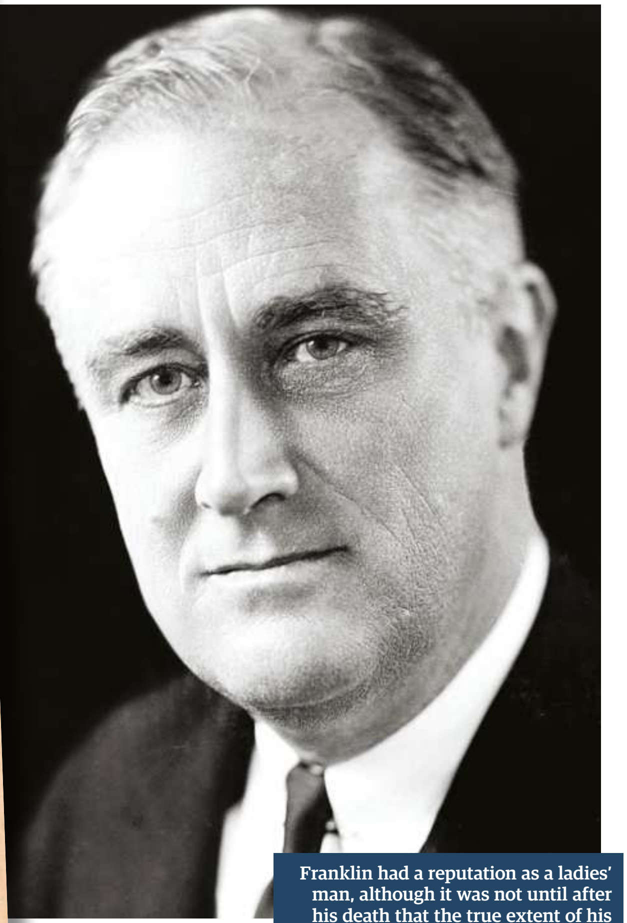
Floating Mine Sighted In the Mid-Atlantic

INDEX

the world, which had been severely damaged because of an article written by American journalist Leland Stowe. Visiting Oslo, Stowe had witnessed the Nazi invasion and misunderstood the Norwegian reaction, thinking that the city's state of shock was evidence that it did not want to be resilient against the Germans. Franklin's speech greatly rectified this and to this day there is a statue in Oslo commemorating him and the support he gave to Norway during World War II.

The iconic 'Look To Norway' speech certainly wasn't the first time that the president had demonstrated his respect for Märtha. On 4 August the previous year, he had boarded his presidential yacht, USS Potomac, under the guise of going on a brief getaway, requesting that Märtha accompany him. As far as the public were aware, they, along with some of Franklin's key aides, were going on a mini holiday together. However, a covert operation was underway. The party travelled to Newfoundland, secretly transferring to USS Augusta, which took them to meet Winston Churchill, the British prime minister. At Newfoundland, Roosevelt and Churchill created the principles for the Atlantic Charter, which would define the relationship between the Allied forces both during and after the war. By inviting the princess, Franklin proved how he not only valued her as his companion, but also as the representative for her country, tirelessly campaigning for its liberation.

Towards the end of the war, Märtha and Franklin's companionship began to fizzle out. The president had been suffering from ill health for a number of years and by 1944 the physical toll on his body was clear to see. He did not wish for



Franklin had a reputation as a ladies' man, although it was not until after his death that the true extent of his infidelities was revealed

Märtha to see him in his fatigued state, knowing that the joy of their relationship derived from the positivity that they instilled in each other. Märtha barely saw Franklin from this point onwards. He attended the Yalta Conference in February 1945 to discuss the plan for peace at the end of the war then retreated to his estate in Warm Springs, Georgia, in order to recuperate upon his return. Unfortunately, Franklin wasn't to see the end of the war – he died of a cerebral haemorrhage on 12 April 1945, less than one month before the German surrender.

As for Märtha, she soon returned to Norway to a hero's welcome when peace was negotiated. Her continued encouragement of the Norwegian people during the dark period of occupation, her role in forging a strong alliance with the United States, and her efforts to promote stability after liberation earned her the moniker 'Mother of Norway'. She would have been loved even more as queen but, just as Franklin had been, she was soon plagued with illness. Nine years after her return to Norway, Märtha passed away from cancer at the age of 53, just three years before her husband ascended the throne as King Olav V.

THE DIVISIVE KING

How Leopold's wartime legacy nearly led to civil war

WRITTEN BY MARK SMITH

Few European royals have proven as divisive in their home countries as Leopold III. Such was the opposition to his rule in Belgium that by the time he abdicated in 1951, the country was almost on the verge of all-out civil war. Was he a hero, victim, collaborator or an outright traitor? It's a question many in his home country are still divided on to this day.

Born Leopold Filips Karel Albert Meinrad Hubertus Maria Miguel in Brussels in November 1901, the son of one of the country's most popular royals would be unexpectedly thrown into the limelight during what would be a time of immense upheaval and crisis for his country, Europe and, indeed, the world.

When Leopold assumed the throne of Belgium in the winter of 1934, it was completely unexpected. His father - a legend to his people for his exploits in World War I and a consummate adventurer - had died suddenly in February of that year during a mountaineering accident. What followed was a huge outpouring of national grief. Albert - known as the King Knight for his skilled leadership of the country's armed forces during World War I - would pass down some impossible shoes to fill.

His wife Elisabeth had been almost as popular as her warrior husband, earning the affectionate title Queen Nurse for her service in Belgian hospitals during the war.

After his father's untimely demise, the new king took the throne alongside his enigmatic Queen Astrid, but soon tragedy would befall her too when she was killed less than a year later.

While driving in Switzerland they were involved in a car crash while Leopold was at the wheel, with his beloved Astrid dying in his arms. Now alone, he would have to shoulder the burden of being his country's sole royal leader.

After the Nazis rose to power in Germany, Western Europe began to look on with deep unease as Hitler made increasingly belligerent speeches and moved to rearm his country's armed forces.

It was during this unsettling period for Europe's major powers that the king and his government settled on a course of neutrality, at the same time investing in defensive measures such as the construction of four new forts east of Liège.

The country also pulled out of the Franco-Belgian agreement of 1920, which although a mutual decision between the two nations would sow the seeds of dissent in the French-speaking parts of the country.

When France and Britain declared war on Hitler's Germany in September of 1939, Belgium mobilised its reserves, but continued to remain strictly neutral.

© Getty

This neutrality counted for naught, however, when Germany unleashed its military might against the Western powers, invading Belgium, France, the Netherlands and Luxemburg on 10 May 1939. Germany swept through each country with a series of stunning victories, each of these made possible by using a combination of surprise and groundbreaking blitzkrieg tactics that combined air power, panzer divisions and mechanised infantry.

Perhaps with the shadow of his war-hero father looming large, this was Leopold's moment; he took command of the Belgian army without any consent from his own government.

With the Belgian army falling to defeat 18 days later, the country's government fled to exile in France, but Leopold stayed behind, citing his desire to share the same fate as his troops and people, 'whatever the outcome'.

However, it was this daring decision that would drive a wedge between him and his country's leadership. His refusal to join his government in exile was a direct violation of his country's constitution.

After the Germans took over the country, Leopold was captured. He was treated well initially, possibly due in large part to his German heritage. His sister, Princess Marie-José, was also married to the Italian crown prince, who was allied to the Germans. But the Belgian government in exile stripped him of his constitutional powers since he was now a captive and unable to govern. His surrender to the Germans was well received both by his military and the population, who felt that he'd prevented a humanitarian disaster.

For the next four years he enjoyed a relatively privileged imprisonment in his castle in Laken, but his decisions and actions during this time were generally not well received by the population or the country's politicians, who had fled to Britain after the fall of France.

In November 1940 the king had personally visited Adolf Hitler in the Berghof in Berchtesgaden, the imagery of the meeting alone helping to propagate the idea that Leopold was a collaborator, when instead he should have been in exile in Britain with his government and providing backing - even if just in spirit - to the Allies.

There was another huge blow to the trust between king and people in December 1941 when it was revealed that the king had secretly married a commoner, London-born Lilian Baels, who he'd met while under German guard, almost two months earlier in a religious ceremony.

The public was only informed one day after the civilian marriage. By this action Leopold had broken

Leopold III with his bride, Astrid of Sweden

Belgian law, since a civil marriage must precede a religious one.

The public began to view the king as no longer a lonely, suffering prisoner, and he alienated the people even further when he announced that his marriage was a 'strictly personal matter' and that he didn't want the title of queen for his wife and did not wish to claim the throne for any of their possible offspring.

One day after the Allies landed in Normandy, Leopold was deported to Germany, with his Nazi overseers fearing he would be liberated by the advancing Allied forces. The Nazis held the family in a fort at Hirschstein in Saxony from June 1944 to March 1945, and then at Strobl, Austria.

When Belgium was liberated in September 1944, a memorandum which had been written by Leopold a year earlier was presented to the government. Declared to be his 'political testament', it was the final nail in the coffin of his relationship with the government.

In it he'd stated that he expected public apologies from his ministers. He also didn't mention the liberation by the Allied forces or praise the work of the resistance, possibly as a precaution in case it had fallen into German hands at the time of writing. Leopold himself was freed by US troops when they accidentally came across him and his wife on 7 May 1945

Following liberation the government was returned to power, but Leopold did not return to Belgium immediately, instead naming his brother, Prince Charles, as regent while Leopold himself moved to Switzerland.

In Belgium, Leopold's wartime legacy began to fuel historic divisions in the two very differing parts of the country. Although Belgium was one nation, the northern part, Flanders (Vlaanderen), spoke Dutch, while the southern part, Wallonia (Wallonie), was French speaking.

In 1950 there was a peak in both Leopoldist and anti-Leopoldist propaganda. The two blocks were each using one side of the story to blame either the decisions of Leopold or the position of the Belgian government.

In March that year a people's referendum to solve 'The Royal Question' took place, with 58 per cent voting in favour of the king - but most of these votes came from the Catholic Party. More importantly, in Flanders, 78 per cent said yes. In Brussels 48 per cent supported him and in Wallonia only 42 per cent agreed.

This would make the king acceptable to only one political party and in only one part of the country, meaning he would no longer be a 'king of all the Belgians' or a symbol of national unity, which the king was supposed to be.

Despite these results, however, parliament permitted his return on 21 June 1950, prompting violent and deadly protests to break out in the streets, as well as one of the most violent general strikes in the history of Belgium. Three protesters were killed when the gendarmerie opened fire on the crowd. Belgian banners were replaced by Walloon flags in Liège and other municipalities of Wallonia, and the whole country seemed to be at the brink of civil war.

To preserve the monarchy, the king had no other choice but to ask parliament, on 11 August, to hand over his royal duties to his oldest son, Prince Baudouin. After this decision the situation began to calm down, and a year later Leopold abdicated the throne. The crown prince now took his constitutional oath, reigning from 1951 to 1993 as King Baudouin of Belgium.

Leopold moved out of the royal castle to live in Château d'Argenteuil in Waterloo in 1960, away from the new king so he could not be accused of having a continuing influence on him or his decisions. He passed away in September 1983 and was laid to rest at the Royal Crypt of Laken among past Belgian kings.

Like many of the royal leaders and heads of state in Europe, the King of Belgium was viewed as a symbol of unity. But the war and Leopold's erratic actions - even while imprisoned - exposed dangerous schisms in the country between Flanders and Wallonia.

Leopold's letter to Hitler in 1942 is credited with saving an estimated 500,000 Belgian women and children from deportation to be put to work in munitions factories in Germany. However, his role in the war saw him vilified by both the French prime minister Paul Reynaud and the former British prime minister David Lloyd George, who claimed that in the "black annals of the most reprobate kings of the earth" there was not "a blacker and more squalid sample of perfidy and poltroonery than that perpetuated by the King of the Belgians".

"THE COUNTRY'S GOVERNMENT FLED TO EXILE IN FRANCE, BUT LEOPOLD STAYED BEHIND"

BOYHOOD SOLDIER

LEOPOLD'S WORLD WAR I EXPLOITS

His father Albert had been a legend of World War I, but Leopold had had his own wartime adventures too.

In August 1914, when Belgium was invaded by Germany, King Albert allowed young crown prince Leopold to enlist in the Belgian Army as a private foot soldier and fight in defence of the kingdom. At just 12 years of age, he was the youngest volunteer in the Belgian army.

On 5 April 1915, Leopold - aged just 13 at that time - joined the Belgian 12th Regiment of the Line. King Albert introduced Leopold to his fellow soldiers on the North Sea beach of De Panne. The king said he did not want any preferential treatment for his son. "Let him work in the trenches. He has to know how it feels to have blisters on his hands."

Just a month later the young crown prince had already served on the front lines - with shells exploding in his trench - but he was unharmed. However, six months later, with Belgium almost entirely occupied by the Germans, Leopold was sent to join Eton College in England, while his father fought on.

When the war was over, the young Leopold marched with his father into the liberated cities of Brussels and Bruges, and with his old regiment into Leuven.

Prince Leopold III and generals Aloise Biebuyck and Detaille visiting the battlefield in Flanders in World War I

A MOST UNFORTUNATE ACCIDENT

The death of Prince George, Duke of Kent, stunned a nation and left his family devastated, but was his untimely demise a tragic mishap, or was a sinister plot behind the crash that killed him?

WRITTEN BY CHARLES GINGER

Prior to the afternoon of 25 August 1942, RAF Invergordon, a seaplane base located in the Scottish county of Ross and Cromarty, was a place of little interest to those outside its barbed fences or the upper echelons of Britain's military aviation branch. Then, in the wartime summer of 1942, this quiet little Highlands town found itself thrust into a maelstrom of tragedy and conspiracy that has never fully settled since. At 1.05pm on that fateful day, a Short Sunderland flying boat took off from Invergordon's RAF base with 15 scheduled people on board bound for Reykjavík, Iceland. Piloted by a crew including flight lieutenant Frank Goyen and wireless operator/rear gunner Andrew Jack, this ungainly looking aircraft was host to a famous passenger: Prince George, Duke of Kent. Accompanied by his closest aides, including his private secretary, John Crowther, George was heading to Iceland to perform non-operational duties. He would never reach his destination.

At 1.42pm, the plane carrying George and his fellow passengers ploughed into Eagle's Rock, a hill near the village of Dunbeath in southeast Caithness (approximately 250 miles north of Edinburgh) in foggy conditions. Within moments of the impact the plane's fuel tank exploded, showering debris across the smouldering hillside. Andrew Jack, positioned in the rear of the plane, was flung clear of the wreckage when the tail was torn off. Picking his way towards the shattered body of the aircraft, he began to frantically search for survivors, sustaining serious burns as he dragged the bodies of the duke and others away from the burning metal that encased them. Despite his valiant efforts, nobody else would survive the crash. George, the fourth son of George V, was just 39 years old.

A local doctor by the name of John Kennedy was one of the first people to arrive at the scene, swiftly followed by police officer Will Bethune. The accounts of both men would come to raise a number of questions about the tragedy.

The official inquiry into the Dunbeath air crash concluded that Goyen was to blame, the Royal Air Force Board stating that a navigational error resulting from Goyen failing to take into account the effect of the wind had seen the plane drift off course by 15 degrees before smashing into Eagle's Rock. As far as the RAF was concerned, Goyen's

© Getty

incompetence had cost the lives of everyone onboard save Andrew Jack. While the inquiry was held in secret, on 7 October Sir Archibald Sinclair addressed the House of Commons, proclaiming that the findings had unearthed no evidence of any damage or fault within the plane's engines, and nor was there anything amiss with the navigational systems. Instead, Sinclair asserted, "The responsibility for this serious mistake in airmanship lies with the captain of the aircraft." He concluded that Goyen had "changed the flight plan for reasons unknown and descended through cloud without making sure he was over water and crashed." However, this simple explanation didn't convince everyone, and even a cursory examination of the facts is enough to punch several holes in the official argument.

The first mystery is Frank Goyen himself. Considered one of the most able Short Sunderland pilots in the entire RAF, Goyen was an extremely experienced flyer, with over 1,000 hours of flying time in a Sunderland. Why would a veteran of Goyen's ability fail to consider such a basic element of flying as the impact of wind? And why would he have chosen to fly at such a low altitude in such dense fog (Doctor Kennedy later testified that he deemed visibility on the day to have been "less than 30 feet")?

There is then the significant question of why the plane was even over land at the time of the crash. A normal flight plan from RAF Invergordon to Iceland's capital of Reykjavík should have seen the Sunderland flying over open ocean all the way to Iceland. What plausible reason did Goyen have to attempt to navigate the Highlands?

The answers to these vital questions almost certainly lay within the official papers from the inquiry, yet they, along with Goyen's flight plan and passenger schedule, have all conveniently gone missing. Could the RAF really have been so incompetent as to mislay the findings of an official inquiry into the death of a senior royal, his closest aides and a number of RAF staff?

One theory as to why the RAF's findings quickly vanished and blame was laid at the door of Goyen (who shortly before the flight handed Jack a photo of himself on which was written "with memories of happier times", a gesture that has never been explained) is a government cover-up. While convalescing in hospital, Andrew Jack was visited by RAF officials, who, he insisted, warned him against speaking to anyone about the incident. He was forced to sign the Official Secrets Act and, true to his word, Jack avoided answering any questions on the crash, maintaining a dignified silence until his death in Brighton in 1978 at the age of 56. But what did the RAF and - more intriguingly - the British establishment want to hide? Many believe it was the fact that the Duke of Kent himself was at the controls at the time of the crash.

In a 2003 interview, Jack's niece Margaret Harris claimed that her uncle had told relatives that the RAF had asked him to deny the duke was flying the aircraft in order to protect his reputation, a secret that Harris said had gnawed at her uncle's conscience for the rest of his days.

"My uncle knew the pilot wasn't to blame yet he couldn't say anything," she told reporters at North Wales Live in December 2003. "As a result he felt he'd let his mate down, and this had a profound effect on him for the rest of his life. He was never the same after the accident, not because of the injuries he sustained, but because of the terrible injustice he was powerless to put right. The thought of the pilot's family believing he had crashed the aircraft was to erode into his conscience until his dying day."

Harris also added that Jack had explained that George had been drinking on the day of the crash and, irritated by a delay to take-off due to the inclement weather, had decided to literally take control. According to Harris, Jack had found the Duke of Kent "slumped in the pilot seat" when he'd raced to the wreckage to try to pull out any survivors. "There was no doubt that he had been flying the plane."

If Jack's account is true, and there seems little reason for him to have lied, then the possibility of a cover-up is greatly enhanced. An intoxicated prince crashing a plane full of passengers into a hill would have caused an unprecedented royal scandal. Yet, while this story seems to be entirely plausible, it is far from a conclusive answer.

When Doctor Kennedy arrived at the scene, he quickly examined the bodies of the victims in a bid

THE MYSTERIOUS DEMISE OF FRED NANCARROW

WAS A LOCAL JOURNALIST KILLED TO COVER UP THE TRUTH?

Ten days after the crash that killed the Duke of Kent and 15 others near Dunbeath, a second Short Sunderland, also from 228 Squadron, was downed in the Highlands. Officials were quick to state that the plane had simply run out of fuel, causing it to drop out of the sky and smash into the ground, killing everyone onboard. However, one of the unfortunate passengers was a journalist tasked with investigating the Eagle's Rock disaster that had claimed the Duke of Kent's life.

Fred Nancarrow, an aviation correspondent for the Glasgow Herald, was looking into the accident at the time of his death, and he'd also previously been commissioned by Lord Provost, Sir Patrick Dollan, to write a revised version of a 1941 book that Dollan had penned on 602 Squadron, an RAF squadron based in Glasgow. The book was to include details about Rudolf Hess's flight to Scotland and the plot to place the Duke of Kent on the Polish throne.

Dollan made a telling note on Nancarrow's unfinished manuscript in the wake of his death. "The time will come when the full story can be told. Fred Nancarrow has written this at my request - he has done his job well."

It is no great exaggeration to say that the death of the one man tasked with investigating the truth about the duke's demise, a man who was also working on a book that may have revealed top-secret political machinations, was far too convenient for the inquiry charged with looking into the Dunbeath air crash? What exactly did Nancarrow know, and was he killed because of it?

The west facade of the Glasgow Herald building where fred Nancarrow worked

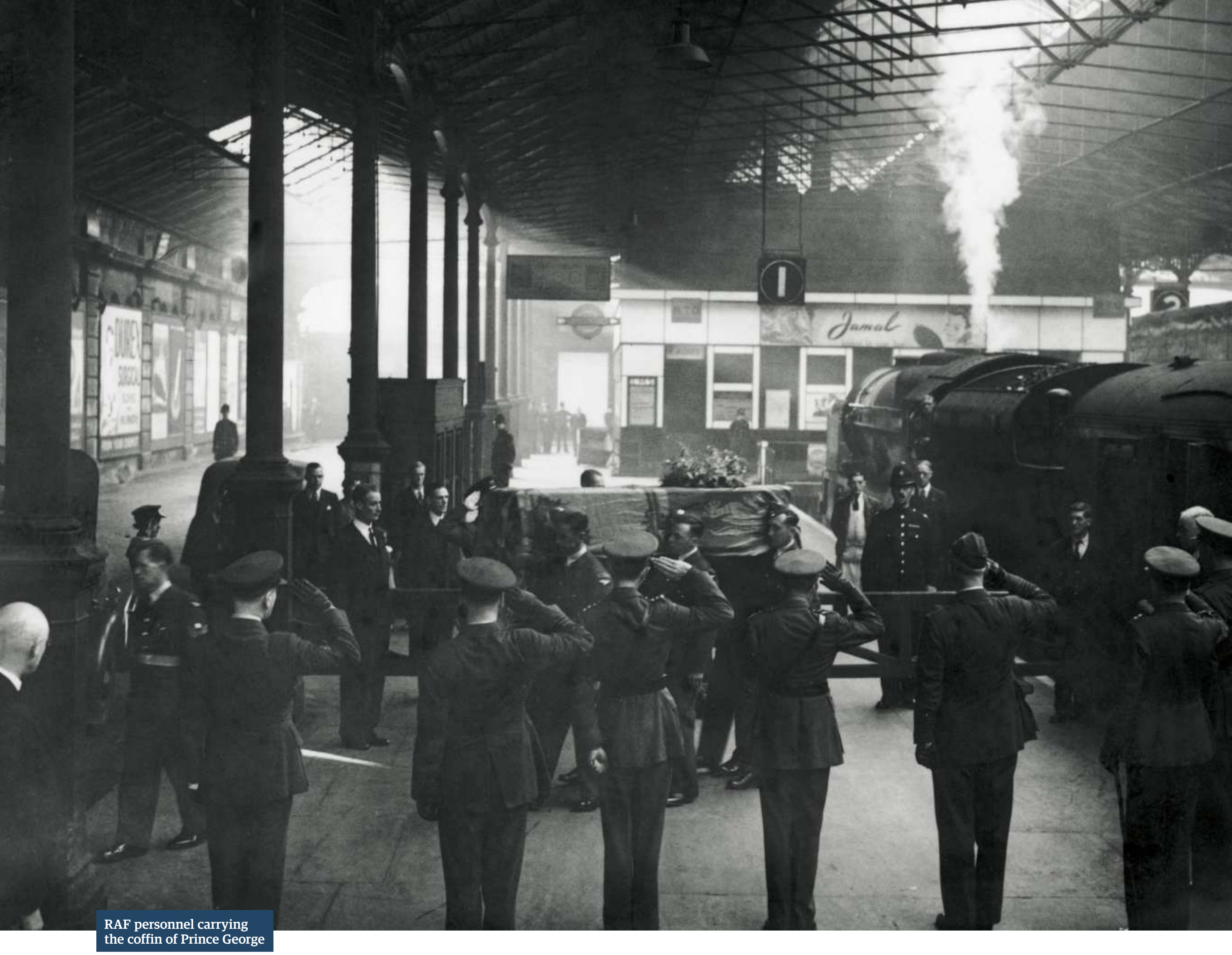
A Short Sunderland flying boat, which could reach 210mph and fly for 1,780 miles

to see if any of them could be saved. Sadly, all of them were already dead. All 15 of them. Despite the official flight schedule reporting 15 passengers, there was in fact an additional mystery traveller aboard the plane. Their identity has never been revealed, with Harris stating that her uncle "didn't say whether the person was male or female". So who was this person?

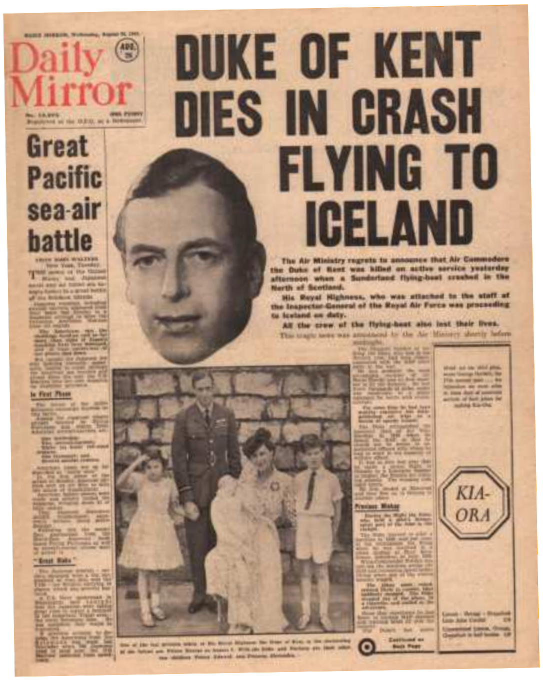
The presence of a figure wearing make up at the RAF base prior to take-off has led some to believe that the 16th passenger was in fact the duke's boyfriend (at the time of the accident numerous rumours swirled about George's sexuality, with allegations that the playwright Noël Coward was among his many lovers). If this extra rider was in fact the duke's male lover it would go a long way to explaining the government's desperation to cover up the truth.

Remarkably, the idea of a hurried effort to protect the deceased George from scandal (be it a drunken crash or the presence of his boyfriend onboard) is not the only reason given for the mystery that still surrounds his death, let alone the most interesting one. For many believe the duke was actually engaged in a top-secret mission at the time of the crash.

The duke is all smiles before a flight across the Atlantic. A frequent flyer, perhaps he did fancy himself as a pilot on that fateful day in August 1942



RAF personnel carrying the coffin of Prince George



Daily Mirror

Great Pacific sea-air battle

DUKE OF KENT DIES IN CRASH FLYING TO ICELAND

The Air Ministry regrets to announce that Air Commodore the Duke of Kent was killed on active service yesterday afternoon when a Sunderland flying-boat crashed in the North of Scotland.

His Royal Highness, who was attached to the staff of the Inspector-General of the Royal Air Force was proceeding to Iceland on duty.

All the crew of the flying-boat also lost their lives.

KIA-ORA

In 2001, Peter Brown, the nephew of pilot officer George Saunders, who was also killed in the crash, told a reporter that in August 1942 Saunders had journeyed home to Sheffield to visit his mother. While he was there, he informed her, "I'm just on leave for a couple of days. I'm going on a most important mission, very secret. I can't say any more." Brown's testament immediately begs a very obvious question: what sort of mission could those onboard the doomed plane have been embarking on? According to some, including PC Bethune, the duke was apparently heading to Sweden.

Ever since George's death some writers and historians have claimed that an intriguing piece of evidence supporting the theory of a covert mission was found at the crash site: a diplomatic briefcase filled with 100-krona notes handcuffed to his wrist. Despite many stating that no such briefcase existed, in a 1988 radio interview Bethune assured listeners that he'd seen the case with his own eyes. If one assumes that Bethune's testimony is accurate, then Sweden is the only logical destination for the plane carrying the Duke of Kent, as 100-krona notes would only have been accepted in Sweden at the time.

But why would the duke have been flying to Scandinavia? Outlandish as it may sound, fake peace talks with Germany, arranged via the Swedish government and designed to mislead the Third Reich, have been posited as the real reason for George's journey. While this claim has never been substantiated, the presence of a prominent royal at a vital strategic meeting seems entirely plausible. And how else to account for the stash of Swedish currency? Perhaps he was bound for Sweden with a more personal motive in mind?

Before his untimely death in the summer of 1942, the Duke of Kent had made regular trips to Poland to inspect British troops stationed there. Afforded the customary treatment that one always received as a member of the royal family, he quickly began to establish close ties with influential Polish figures. According to one theory, George made quite the impression, for a nascent monarchist movement was starting to pose seriously the idea of reinstating

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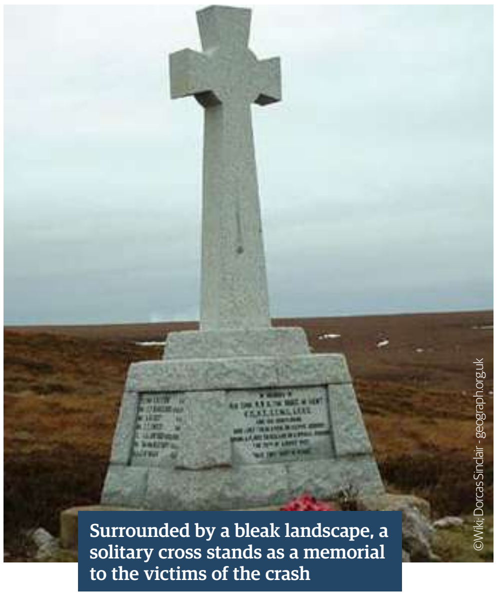
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Surrounded by a bleak landscape, a solitary cross stands as a memorial to the victims of the crash

the Polish monarchy (the previous Polish king, Stanisław Poniatowski, had been forced to abdicate his throne in 1795 when the country was partitioned by the Russian Empire, Prussia and the Holy Roman Empire), and George was put forward as the ideal candidate to become Poland's new king.

Further fuel was added to these royalist flames when it emerged that, prior to the dual invasion of Poland by Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union in 1939, General Władysław Sikorski, Poland's exiled wartime prime minister, made a similar offer to the duke. The formation of a Polish-Czechoslovakian federation with George at the helm was put forward by Sikorski, who, after the duke's death, described him glowingly as a "true friend to Poland."

As with most of the rumours that still swirl around George's death, concrete proof of this astonishing theory has remained frustratingly elusive. However, in the words of Dr Andrzej Suchcitz, chief archivist at the London Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum, "there's no smoke without fire." Could it be that the duke was in fact heading to legitimate talks with the Third Reich in Sweden, and that rumours of the Germans being open to the idea of ceding large sections of Poland (minus Silesia) to the Allies were true? Unless fresh evidence surfaces, it's likely we will never know for sure.

While all of these theories each have their supporters and vary in nature from the politically seismic to the scandalous, none of them could be described as sinister. Either the duke was drunk at the controls, aboard an RAF plane with a secret lover or embarking on a mission of national importance. Regardless of whichever theory is the closest to the truth, they all, their advocates agree, ended in a tragic accident. However, there is one argument that suggests that George's death was in fact a far more sinister event.

It is little secret that Edward VIII, the king who abdicated his throne in December 1936 in order to wed the American divorcee Wallis Simpson, was a Nazi sympathiser, at least prior to the outbreak of World War II. Detailed accounts have revealed that Edward deemed Hitler a good leader who did well by Germany, and a report dated 25 June 1940 by a Spanish diplomat (Spain was at the time a fascist ally of Germany's) states that Edward openly believed that the bombing of England was certainly a means by which Germany could defeat her stubborn enemy. Yet while Edward's Nazi leanings are well documented, what of his brother's? Was the Duke of Kent also a Nazi sympathiser? Two historians believe he was not only a Nazi supporter, but that they have proof that George was in Scotland at the time of Rudolf Hess's famous flight from Germany on 10 May 1941, and that the two in fact worked to hatch a plan to overthrow Winston Churchill and undermine the British war effort.

After examining over 10,000 files, John Harris and Richard Wilbourn, authors of Rudolf Hess: Treachery and Deception, firmly believe that George was planning to stage a coup. "Having weighed up all the evidence, and in light of recent discoveries we have made, we now believe that it was, in fact, a coup attempt centred around Prince George," explained Harris.

If this stunning theory is true, then it would lend credence to the idea that the British establishment was aware of the duke's ambitions and promptly set about engineering some kind of 'accident' that would put paid to his devious plans and avoid the grave threat of a puppet king controlled by the Nazis from ruling Britain. Furnished with this unbelievable information, Churchill would have had no choice but to order the duke's immediate termination. However, as tempting as it may be to believe a ruthless government plot brought down the plane carrying the Duke of Kent, there is no evidence to suggest that this was the case. It's believed that the Duke of Kent was in agreement with his brother King George VI both about Churchill being the right man to lead the country and the direction of the war effort.

It seems that for all the fantastical theories and conspiracies that continue to shroud the tragic death of a man who was not yet 40 and left behind a wife and three children, George's demise was just that: a tragedy. Whether it was a horrific disaster of his own making or the crash was truly caused by a navigational error, we will likely never know. Unless, of course, the official inquiry's files ever come to light. After all, they must have been made to disappear for a reason…

THE MISSING CHAPTER

WHY DIDN'T THE AUTHOR WITH THE ONLY PHOTOS OF THE WRECKAGE MENTION THE CRASH IN HIS BOOK?

On the morning after the crash that killed the Duke of Kent, Captain E E Fresson flew over the wreckage and took the only photographs of the site. 23 years later his autobiography, titled Air Road to the Isles, was published. Strangely, the work of this aviation pioneer made absolutely no mention of the Dunbeath air crash. Why would the only person with images of that fateful incident neglect to include them in a book that was the culmination of a life's work? According to his son Richard, he didn't.

Despite the lack of any mention of the crash in the final, published book, Richard has confirmed that his father's original manuscript included an entire chapter on the crash and his own investigation into it. It wasn't Captain Fresson who removed the crash from his book but his publishers, who chose to pull the chapter just before going to print. Were they pressured by someone to do so? And if so, what were they trying to hide?

CAPT TED FRESSON
LANDED THE FIRST
SCHEDULED AIR SERVICE

A memorial to Captain Fresson at Kirkwall Airfield in Orkney. Why were his photographs pulled from his autobiography?

MODERN ROYALTY ON THE FRONT LINE

Meet the princes who have fought for their country since the bloody days of WWI and WWII

WRITTEN BY SCOTT REEVES

The order to man the guns sent the British soldiers to their designated places. Between 16 and 20 Taliban soldiers had been spotted making their way towards JTAC Hill, a heavily defended position within sight of enemy trenches, and the Taliban were moving forward in attack formation. Among the soldiers firing the machine guns was a young cornet - a second lieutenant in the Blues and Royals - who did so for the first time. His Gurkha colleague captured the moment on camera: "This is the first time I've fired a .50 cal," the shooter admitted with a smile. The Taliban were sent packing and the young officer resumed his duties as a forward air controller, the eyes on the ground guiding air strikes from F-15s above, and on patrol through the bombed-out streets of Garmsir in war-ravaged Helmand Province.

It may have just been another day on the southern frontier of coalition territory in Afghanistan, but that small engagement in January 2008 marked the first time that Prince Harry fired a gun on the front lines. It was a moment a long time in coming. Harry was pulled from his regiment before it left for what should have been his first deployment to Iraq in May 2007. Credible threats had been made against the prince and it was decided that his presence would endanger the lives of his fellow soldiers. Instead, Harry was redirected to a Canadian training base before being quietly slipped into Afghanistan with the Royal Gurkha Rifles in December.

The British and Canadian media agreed a news blackout until the prince returned from his deployment, and Harry enjoyed the anonymity of the war zone. The few civilians on the streets did not recognise the famous face in their midst and fellow soldiers were requested not to let slip about their comrade-in-arms when they phoned home, but rumours began circulating in the foreign press and US-based website *The Drudge Report* reported the story on 28 February.

Harry was quickly withdrawn from Afghanistan amid fears that suicide attacks would target the high-profile soldier, but the frustrated prince voiced his wish to return to active duty. The next four years were spent training to fly Apache helicopters before Harry returned to Afghanistan in September 2012 with 662 Squadron of the Army Air Corps. Their orders were to operate from

DO NOT
GRAB
DANGER
CAPT

The cockpit on an Apache helicopter was considered a safer place for the prince to serve, and he successfully completed a full second tour

Prince Nasser bin Hamad has been dogged by allegations of torture carried out on his orders during the Arab Spring of 2011

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Internat
Film Fes

Sheikh Mansoor bin Mohammed records his privileged life on Instagram but joined his country's forces fighting in Yemen

Camp Bastion, the large hub that the British Army operated from in Helmand Province. There was no news blackout and the Taliban were quick to make clear their desire to kill or capture the prince, but the airbase was too strong for them to attempt any such mission.

This time Captain Wales completed his 20-week deployment, his last trip to the front lines before leaving the army in June 2015. He lived in a converted shipping container that he shared with a bunkmate and spent his time in the air as a co-pilot gunner taking the war to the enemy he called "Terry Taliban". Among the missions he took part in were strikes to support ground troops at close quarters and accompanying British Chinook and US Black Hawk helicopters on casualty evacuation runs. Harry later revealed that he had come under fire and had killed the enemy as "lots of people have", but he was also criticised for comparing his experience as a gunner to playing Playstation and Xbox games.

Prince Harry was the latest in a long tradition of British royalty wearing military uniform; his father had served in the navy and his brother also trained as a helicopter pilot during an eight-year military career. Even so, Harry was only the second member of the royal family to serve on the front lines since 1945. The first to do so was his uncle, Prince Andrew, who was serving as a helicopter pilot on HMS Invincible when the Falkland Islands were invaded on 2 April 1982.

Questions were immediately raised about whether the then second-in-line to the British throne – the same position Harry held in Afghanistan three decades later – should be sent into action. The nervous Cabinet suggested that Andrew be shunted from 820 Naval Air Squadron into a desk job for the duration of the conflict, but the Queen backed her son's wish that he remain

> "HARRY WAS ONLY THE SECOND ROYAL TO SERVE ON THE FRONT LINES SINCE 1945. THE FIRST WAS PRINCE ANDREW"

with the ship and his comrades. When Invincible set sail on 5 April with more than 100 other vessels as part of the naval task force, the royal sub-lieutenant was on board.

The next two months, in Andrew's own words, were "99 per cent boredom and one per cent terror". The grinding routine of flying, sleeping and eating blurred the line between night and day as the prince was despatched on anti-submarine patrols (dropping sensitive sonar microphones into the sea from a low-level hover) and using his Sea King for troop transport. His helicopter was also used for Exocet decoy, luring Argentine missiles away from the fleet by allowing them to lock on to his helicopter before climbing steeply as it approached, allowing the missile to fly harmlessly beneath it.

Andrew was reportedly flying decoy when two Exocet missiles struck SS Atlantic Conveyor, a requisitioned container ship being used to carry supplies for the task force. He later described bits of debris hitting the water a quarter of a mile away and said the scene was "horrific", but his helicopter was among those that pulled 26 sailors from the water. Andrew was also in the air on a search and rescue patrol when a Vulcan bomber hit Port Stanley Airport. "Security didn't tell us why we were there," he said, "but it was fairly obvious when we saw lots and lots of smoke coming out."

When Port Stanley fell to British troops, Andrew took the opportunity to pick up a telephone in the capital and asked to be put through to Buckingham Palace. During the surreal 15-minute phone call, the surprised but delighted Queen asked for her best wishes to be passed on to Andrew's brave compatriots. When Invincible returned to Portsmouth after the conflict the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh were there too – not in an official capacity, but as family members waiting to greet their loved one.

Elizabeth II is not the only monarch to have waited nervously for news while members of her family have engaged the enemy on the battlefield. In September 2014, Prince Khalid bin Salman – a son of Crown Prince Salman of Saudi Arabia, who became king the following year – climbed out of a cockpit of a Royal Saudi Air Force F-15 fighter jet having just returned from a bombing run over Syria. Khalid piloted one of four Saudi aircraft that flew alongside fighters from Bahrain, Jordan, Qatar, the UAE and the US to conduct raids against Islamic State. Intelligence suggested that two waves of air strikes and missiles launched from a US destroyer killed 70 IS militants and destroyed military installations across their area of control.

The royal mission not only sent a clear message to Saudi citizens that Islamic State was an enemy of the kingdom; it also reassured the West that Saudi Arabia was serious about tackling Islamic extremism in the Middle East. However, Prince Khalid was not a propaganda puppet and his inclusion was no mere symbolic gesture. He had earned the right to fly on such a vital mission courtesy of graduating the King Faisal Air Academy and extensive training on the F-15 at American air bases. Before leaving the air force to take up a position as ambassador to the US, Khalid flew sorties over Yemen during the Saudi-led intervention during the civil war.

Khalid may well have flown over two other princes as he conducted his missions in the skies above Yemen. The coalition forces drew from across the Middle East and included Sheikh Mansoor bin Mohammed, the son of Dubai ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, and Prince Nasser bin Hamad, a member of the Bahraini royal family and commander of the Royal Guard Force.

Both Mansoor and Nasser revealed that they were on the front lines in a very 21st-century way – photographs, selfies and videos on Instagram – but both had a traditional military education at the long-established school for royal officers: the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst on the Surrey-Berkshire border. Among the post-war heads of state who travelled to the UK for its gruelling initial officer training course are the kings and sultans of Bahrain, Brunei, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Tonga and the UAE.

Perhaps Britain is such a magnet for overseas royalty seeking a military education due to its reputation for princely service in the armed forces. Prince Harry is the last member of the British royal family to serve in a war zone, Prince Andrew risked his life before that, and the chances are that the practice will continue in the future. When the opportunity to serve their country presents itself, the House of Windsor – like many other royal families around the world – is not afraid to put its sons on the front line.

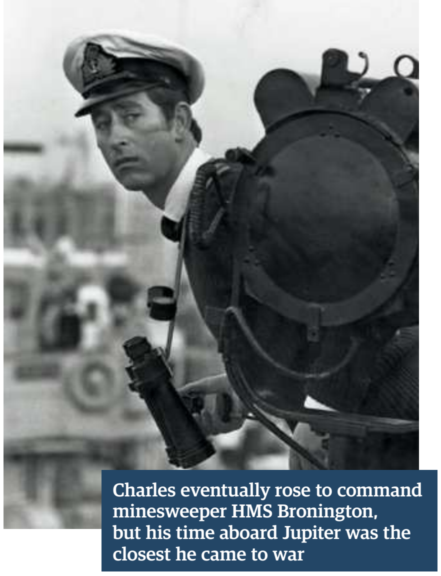
Former fighter pilot Prince Khalid bin Salman has gone on to be Saudi Arabia's Deputy Defence Minister

COTTON-WOOL CHARLES

THE FORMER PRINCE OF WALES WAS KEPT SAFE DURING HIS YEARS AT SEA

During his time as heir to the throne, King Charles spent six years in uniform, but unlike his brother Andrew and son Harry, he was kept well away from an active war zone. Much of his naval career was spent cramming for exams to gain the qualifications necessary for command – Charles apparently found navigation a particular trial – and he duly rose through the ranks, spending several months as HMS Jupiter's communications officer during her stint in the Pacific Ocean in early 1974. The tour began peacefully enough and the prince was free to leave the ship for the Commonwealth Games in Auckland and to socialise with California Governor Ronald Reagan and legendary crooner Frank Sinatra in San Diego.

However, the top brass had a decision to make when Turkey invaded Cyprus in July 1974. Although the royal lieutenant craved "some sort of action" and the chance to prove himself in battle, the Admiralty chose to keep Jupiter well away from the Mediterranean. NATO training exercises off the coast of Scotland were deemed a more suitable activity for the frigate and her VIP officer. "I never had a chance to test myself," Charles would later lament, "It's terribly important to see how you react, to be tested."



Charles eventually rose to command minesweeper HMS Bronington, but his time aboard Jupiter was the closest he came to war

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IN THE SHADOW OF WAR, THE WORLD'S MONARCHIES HAD TO ADAPT OR CRUMBLE

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